Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

How to Live the Christ Life

How to Live The Christ Life

By
RUSSELL H. CONWELL

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I

YOUR SALVATION

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (*Phil. ii. 12.*)

"If you cannot, on the ocean, sail among the swiftest fleet,
Rocking on the highest billows, laughing at the storms you meet."

IF you cannot do the great deeds, you can do the little ones.

"You can stand among the sailors anchored yet within the bay,
You can lend a hand to help them, as they launch their boats away.

"If you are too weak to journey up the mountain steep and high,
You can stand within the valley, as the multitudes go by;
You can chant in tuneful measure, as they slowly pass along;
Though they may forget the singer, they will not forget the song.

"If you cannot, in the conflict, prove yourself a warrior true;
If, where fire and smoke are thickest, there's no work for you to do;

When the battle-field is silent, you can go with careful tread;
You can bear away the wounded, you can cover up the dead.

"If you cannot, in the harvest, garner up the richest sheaves;
Many a grain, both ripe and golden, which the careless reaper leaves
You can find among the briars, growing rank against the wall;
And it may be that the shadows hide the heaviest wheat of all.

"If you have not gold and silver ever ready at command,
If you cannot toward the needy reach an ever open hand,
You can visit the afflicted, o'er the erring you can weep,
You can be a true disciple, sitting at the Saviour's feet.

"Do not, then, stand idly waiting for some greater work to do,
Fortune is a lazy goddess; she will never come to you.
Go, and toil in any vineyard—do not fear to do or dare,
If you want a field of labour, you can find it anywhere."

And when God says to us, through the inspired apostle, that we must "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," He means that there is a place of labour for every one of us, and we should be at work in it.

There is a wide difference between Christianity and heathenism, in this, that the Chinese, and the heathen of India, and the heathen of the Islands of the Sea, all have a religion which says, "Do not, do not." Christ's words, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," were spoken in China long before His time, only they were reversed. They said, "Do not unto others as you would not have any one do to you." That is the chief characteristic. They are negative; and instead of saying, "Go, work," they say, "Do not, go not." But over against this is Christianity, which says, "Do, do, do!" There's a work for us to do, if we are to be saved, and if the world is to be saved. Christ says, "Go, work in My vineyard," and if a man says, "I find nothing to do," or if a woman says, "I find there is nothing that I can perform," there is a lack somewhere; because God furnishes a work for every one of us to do. There is a work for you, and for me, and if we would be saved, or if we would save others, we must work out that salvation, both for ourselves and for them.

If a person does not work, he stands in the way of those who do. That is one thing that Scriptures and common sense both teach

us ; he either stands in other people's way or the world goes on and leaves him behind.

If a person stands still, as in a balloon, if he get high enough, the world would go on, and leave him ; and if he reached the top of the atmosphere, and there rested, the world would go on, and when he came down he would find the world had passed him at the rate of many thousand miles a minute. And it is just so with the Christian who tries to stand still, and with any man in the community who tries to stand still ; and every person who is not advancing, unless he is in some one's way is so far above that the world is going on, and leaving him behind. To be without work means to decay, and to grow unseemly—to putrefy ; to stop work means to rest like the water in the pool that is not stirred by a fish or by a fowl, or the wind of heaven ; it becomes covered with scum, and fills itself with miasma ; it not only poisons itself, and is fearful looking, but it spreads abroad, through all the neighbourhood, terrible diseases. The heart, whether it claims to be a Christian, or not, has just the same effect on itself and on others in its vicinity, if it stops doing its duty. As I have said, a man either stagnates, or the world passes on and leaves him, or he is in other

persons' way. If he cannot get up in some high, theological balloon, he is down among men, and in the crowd; and when a person walking along, going with the crowd, suddenly stops, every one runs against him, the crowd thickens about him, and the policemen rush up to see if there is any difficulty in which they need to interfere. What is the trouble? Nothing more than a man stopping on the sidewalk, as the great pressure moves down the street.

So in Christianity, if a man stops, he is in other persons' way, and makes great trouble. The Bible never says a man should stand still in a crowd.

He may know by the amount of work he does, or is willing to do, in what stage of Christian development he is. To stop is a kind of treachery.

I remember when I was a child, seeing a little bird which was left at our house by the man who owned it. That little bird laid eggs there, and hatched them out into little birdies. It was an exceedingly interesting thing to me. I remember climbing up on a chair, and tipping the chair over in climbing up, to see those little birdies. How my little roguish fingers ached to get hold of them. But my mother told me it would be very

cruel, because the old bird wished to bring them up. She said they would have wings, and feathers, and would be able to fly, after a while, and we would have more cages, and more little birdies in them, to sing around the house. But that old bird fed them for one or two days. Then she just stopped, and sat up on the perch in the cage, twitted and chirped away, and did not go near the nest at all. She rested up there at night, and in the daytime she would not go near them, even when the little mouths would open. We would watch them until the tears would start down our faces. We tried to feed them by dropping crumbs down their mouths, and we kept them alive for a few days in that way, but it was of no use. The old bird did not care anything about them. I never saw such a hard-hearted wretch (outside of humanity) in all my life as that mother-bird was so to neglect her own. The birdies all died, and my little sister and I dug a grave for each of them, and buried them.

I have always since had an extreme hatred of such treachery as that. But it illustrates how a man or a woman may stop, and others starve, and suffer, and die, because we cease to do for them. It is our duty to go on. The Bible insists upon this. It is treachery

to a friend to stop. You sometimes see a Christian who says, "I don't do wrong—I never lie, or steal, or rob. I am all right. I never do anything that is wrong." You sometimes hear Christian men and women say they will not do anything one way or another,—"I never do anybody any harm."

They have friends, perhaps, to whom they are greatly indebted, perhaps friends who have helped them by lending them money or spending time for them, or by giving them their reputation, or, it may be a friend has, in times past, braved danger to save them; and when the time comes for this person to need a defense, this one who has been helped, this moral, just, Christian man, who "never does any one any harm," when the time comes for him to speak, to contend, to strike a blow in defense of his friend, he says, "I never take a share in any quarrels; I never say anything for my friends, or against them; I just stop, and do nothing."

Such a man is a traitor, such a man is a kind of Satan; he is beneath reproach, a man who will stand quiet when his word, or action, or blow, would defend his friend.

And yet many Christians reason out of the Bible, somehow, that it is their duty to leave everything to Christ, and to God, and to

other people, and that they may only stand and look on. That is hideous treachery. "He that hath friends must show himself friendly," or else he is a traitor to those friends. There is no "standing still" in friendship or patriotism. A man may say, "I am a patriot, and love my country," but when the time comes to defend his city, or home, or state, if he simply stands still, and says, "Oh, I never did anything against my nation; I am all right, I am all pure, I am a patriot, because I have not done any harm," that man is a traitor. Yea, the man that can help his nation, and will not make an effort to do so, is a sinner. Far better be decidedly on one side or the other, far better be an open enemy, than be neither hot nor cold, and be spued out of the mouth of the nation, as the churches of old were spued out of the mouth of God.

The man who stands still in the service of God is a traitor. God saith, "Go, work in My vineyard; go, do something for Me." God desires that heaven shall be peopled with every human soul He has created; He desires that none should be lost. The gates of heaven are left open all the time, and He desires to have you direct souls into the gateways.

Do you say, "But I am not going to interfere with this matter at all. I am going to be one of the non-combatants. I go to church, I say my prayers, and read my Bible. No one ever heard me utter a bad word, or tell a lie. No one ever heard me say or saw me do anything wrong." Ah, no; but who has ever heard you speak or has seen you do anything good? The Bible says, "Cease to do evil, and learn to do well." "No man can be on both sides at the same time," says Jesus Christ, and the man who tries to be is the most contemptible sort of character. The man who is always "on the fence," ready to declare at any time for what may appear to be the winning side, or the side that will best serve his selfish interests, has received, and has well deserved to receive, the contempt of the public for the last two thousand years.

When we bring this into theology we bring in a most contemptible spirit, and one which is against every precept and expression in God's holy word.

A lazy man is a dangerous man, anyhow. We know that. Ah! what have been the dangers of this nation from lazy men?

Men amass a million of dollars, and feel themselves a rich aristocracy, and because

they are not compelled to labour with thei hands for a living, and because they are no compelled to labour very much with thei brains—because they are free to do as they please—they become a very dangerous class

If this nation is threatened with any danger as a nation, and if our communities ar threatened with any danger that is greate than others at this time, it is the danger tha comes from immensely wealthy men, an from immensely rich corporations, who growing idle in their wealth, growing lazy and having no sympathy with working men getting afar off from those who labour, begi to think the world was made for them, tha it is for their entire use and benefit that God and Providence, and mankind are working and that all the rest of the world is workin just to pander to their every taste and desire They begin to feel that they are little god on earth, and because they have a millio or two million, or a hundred million of dol lars, they think they have the right to pu their foot on the neck of every man wh works, and put their heel on every one wh labours for his living.

There was a time when corporations wer a good thing; to have a railroad from her to San Francisco was a great thing for th

labouring man,—but only just so long as it was next to the labouring man. So soon as the aristocracy got control of it (a lot of men who draw from the world its most desirable things, and give nothing in return), just that soon did it become a curse to the land, and unless God interferes there will be woe ahead of us, because of this idle rich class in the community.

But there is hope ahead. With a great deal of satisfaction I have watched the progress of scientific discoveries of the last five years. They are getting things so perfected now that you can take a machine, and set it up in your own home, and you can manufacture cloth, and hosiery, and almost everything that is made, of the small wares, such as cutlery and other things, which are manufactured by the most gigantic corporations. If you have enterprise and skill of fingers you can use them in this way.

There is hope for the labouring man. God, who sees the labouring man, and to whom the labourer is especially dear, is working out this problem for us, and through the improvements in machinery is putting more power into the hands and brains of the labourers, and capital and corporations must go to the wall, or give such concessions as

will make labour more free. I can see that not far distant.

There is hope ahead, for the labouring people are being educated. The "lower classes" (as we often call them), as they flow into this country, are being given a common school, or a private school education; and, by and by, unless, through this other provision—the improvement of machinery—labourers are saved, they will arise in their might, and, working together, will tax heavily, as it ought to be taxed, the property of every man who is worth more than a million of dollars.

No man has a right to own a million of dollars in a community where men are dying of starvation.

These labourers will, by and by, see that they have the power—if they possess the disposition to work together as a single party—and they will rise, and free themselves from the oppression of this idle rich class that now threatens them with a kind of slavery; and the time will come soon when each man, understanding how to combine with others against capital, can win improvements for himself and for his nation.

There is hope ahead; but yet while this idle class, this non-labouring class of rich men is a danger to the nation, there is great

danger, on the other hand, from the idle classes of the poor.

You remember how it was out in Pittsburgh when they had the great strike. They were poor men, and out of employment. The streets were not safe for a woman at any hour of the night, or of the day; and when men went out in the streets, they carried revolvers or dirk knives in their hands for defense against the out-of-work population.

Thus we see in practical life everywhere, to be out of work is not only to be a curse to one's self, but a danger to the community. We have seen it in Philadelphia; in time of strikes, women dared not go out-of-doors, and people double-locked their houses at night, and wanted more policemen—because of the strikes and idleness of the working men.

Throw out of work all the working people of this city, and how soon it would go down in a volcano of flames!

It is so when the church has in it lazy people, and members who will not work, and people who are in the way. They may get up so high above the rest that work will go on without them. But if they stay down with the church they will be in the way, or a standing curse to the church because of

their lack of work. When persons choose the church, choose God, and then stop, they stagnate, and spread miasma. It is a traitorous position towards the church, and it is trying to use deception with God. When He says, "Work out your own salvation," no man has the right to cease to work. Work, work for everybody, is the only security against stagnation, and division in churches. Many Christian brethren, ministerial brethren, have said to me: "Your great church cannot hold together as human nature is. It stands to reason that when you cannot get your own members into the church building there will come a time when they will all want to get in, and when men jostle each other, and when people stand in crowds, they naturally become irritable, and there will come a great division in your church, in the ordinary course of nature."

That certainly will come (as far as we can judge by human nature) unless this church is kept at work. But working people, when busy doing some favourite duty, never stop to quarrel. It is the lazy people who quarrel; it is the lazy people who gossip; it is the lazy people who spread trouble through the church, and who do nothing but talk about others; it is not they who are actively at work. If

this church would save itself from future dissolution it must be at work.

Yet we say, "Faith must go with work." Yes, that is so; faith must go with work, but we have not dwelt enough on work. We have been taught the theory, which never came into our creed by right, that "nothing either great or small remains for me to do," and that, if we will only just trust in Christ, and believe in Him, it is all right, and we can sit down and wait until the car moves. That is all we have to do; if we only believe in Christ, that is the end of it. We have been taught, again and again, that there is no merit in works, nothing you or I can do to win the favour of God. But that it is all through the great mercy and intercession of Jesus Christ. That goes to the extreme, which makes it falsehood, and denies the words of Christ when He says, "Work out your own salvation," and when He tells us to go and work in His vineyard. What does God say? "Every man shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body."

The fact is, faith must go with works. You cannot separate them: and when a man would teach, or when Christians would believe, that now all they have to do is to lie on "flowery beds of ease," and wait for the

angels to "carry them to the skies," they will not do so. Unless we work no angels of God will come for us. If we think they will we have entirely mistaken the teaching of the Bible. To take one particular clause in the Bible, to be taught James' side, or Paul's side, without taking in the others', is an entire mistake. We cannot make much of an error in dwelling entirely upon good deeds, because we have heard so much on the other side.

I never wish to hear any one sing, "Nothing either great or small remains for me to do," because the man is an infidel who believes that, and I don't believe the person who wrote that hymn really meant all that the line implies. There is no such thing as inactive Christianity, and God teaches us we ought to encourage good works, and reward good works, and praise good works, instead of belittling them. We see a member of the church who is doing noble deeds, and we say, "We must not praise him, because he must not accept praise. He is saved by the extreme mercy of God, and not by what he does." All of which is true, if you only combine the two, but the Scriptures teach us that we ought to honour men who have Christian character and do Christian work. We erect monuments to men who cross the seas, and

find new continents ; we erect monuments to them for the deeds that they have done. We erect columns to great generals, who have led armies to victory—for the deeds that they have done. Why should we not honour earnest Christians if they do great deeds, and erect monuments to good men for the deeds they have done ?

We should not wish to take to ourselves praise ; and when we have done a good deed we should, as Christians, say that we have done nothing, and that we have not laboured at all, that it is not us at all, it is all God and all Christ. We own that we have not amounted to much ; we are but worms of the dust that crawl upon the ground ; even if we have done something, God commanded us to do it, and if we had not done it we would have been the most ungrateful of creatures. But for all that, a Christian man has a right to rejoice, and it is time that the world recognized it. When, in the old Spartan day, a man, stripped to the waist, went out with his sword and shield to fight for his country, if he came back alive and victorious, even though his sword was broken and his body covered with wounds, he was received with loud acclaim by his countrymen. He had done good deeds, and he knew he had done them, and

that he had a right to be proud of it. And when Spartacus uttered that wonderful speech in Rome, that speech which has been considered the model of warlike orations, he took pride in never having lowered his arm in defeat. It was something to respect and honour, because what he said was true. Then, in the old Roman days, when Cincinnatus went back to his plow ; after having saved his nation, he returned to his humble pursuits, he went back with the consciousness of a deed well done, and he was not afraid to say so. He said, "I have done this, and I am proud of it." And a man ought to find satisfaction in his Christianity.

The old Roman matron, when her friends came and asked to see her most precious jewels, gathered her children around her, and said, "These are my jewels." She was proud of having been a good mother ; and to be a good mother is to be a Christian mother. A Christian mother is a good mother, in the best sense. We often misunderstand the fact that God is gentleness and God is love, and that the mother's heart is love ; the true mother, who is proud of her children, has a right to be so.

When the old knight went out to defend the weak and the helpless, and to shield

womanhood then in slavery, to protect the orphan and the poor; and when he, within the Lists, took his single spear, and overthrew the enemy; he, himself, rode around, after he had gained the victory, and held high his broken spear. And they honoured him for being proud of a great and noble deed.

So the warrior, when he fights for his country and secures for it liberty and honour, while he himself, in his modesty, may refuse to speak of it, yet he is proud of having done his duty well. What man who has lost his leg or his arm in defense of his country, is not proud of it?

I remember going over the battle-field of Gettysburg with some of the soldiers who had been in the fight. They showed me the places where the different regiments had stood, where the dead had been taken up, and who had fallen there; and as they showed me the stone wall, the old quarry, the wheat field, and peach orchard through which the charge was made, and thence up to Round Top, and over other portions of the ground, the faces of those men glowed, and they entered into it with all zest as though it were the story of but yesterday. They had a right to be proud, and no man would take away that right from them.

So with the Christian. The Christian who has done good deeds has a right to be glad of it. The man who has never told a lie; the man who has never wronged any one; the man who, like Paul, can say, "I have never defrauded any man," has a right to be self-satisfied. Still more right has he who can say, "I have helped many." Paul, as he looked back on his past life, tells God, "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith." He had a right to tell God so, for he had lived such a life, and it was the truth, and God expected him to tell the truth. A Christian, who has wronged no man or woman, and who has really made men better and nobler, has a right to say so while he lives, and to have a monument when he dies, as much as any other great conqueror. And if he does not get a monument in this life, he will get one in the life to come, for God says, "Ye shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body." But you cannot do good deeds without faith. You need to be inspired by a spirit of love for goodness, and truth, and holiness, in order to do good deeds. But he who has done them, God will reward. A man who can look up to God, and into his fellow beings' lives, and truthfully say, "I have lived in all good works to those about

me," has something that he himself can enjoy.

When the time comes for him who has done good deeds to be received into the New Jerusalem, do you suppose he will go crawling up the stairs? Does the Bible tell us that the Christian will be received in that way?

As the old Roman conquerors came back from the East, and brought with them the trophies of their victories, and marched through Rome, with their chariots, while their countrymen crowded the pavements, and welcomed them with music on every side and every indication of joy, so will the Christian be welcomed into the New Jerusalem; God and Christ will welcome him, and all the people who have gone before will welcome him. Ah! what a triumphal march that will be! One comes out to the front and says, "He is come. Why, I should not have been in heaven but for him!" and another says, "He is come! The one who divided his portion with me!" "The one who established the school where I was educated!" "The one who helped the nation into liberty, and made it possible for me to worship God!" "He is come!" "He is come!" All through that magnificent city it will resound, —to the throne of God Himself. And he

who has done his duty, and has done good deeds, and has worked faithfully, because of his love for Christ and God, will be received with all the triumph of heaven, and all the anthems of its beautiful music will be sounding his praise, and he will be known to all the city as one who has done something good, for the sake of, and in the name of, and for the cause of, Jesus Christ.

II

HOW TO PRAY

"And Elijah said to his servant, 'Go up now and look towards the sea.' And he went up and looked, and said: 'There is nothing.'" (*1 Kings xviii. 43.*)

HOW to pray! This subject must be in the inner chambers of every Christian's heart. If a man has power with God he desires to use it so as to accomplish great results. How to pray!

In Richmond, Virginia, a father with an only daughter brought her up in such luxury that every want was anticipated. She had carriages, she had beautiful works of art in her rooms, she had the finest clothing, the most costly gems, and lived in a mansion. She went to the American seashore in the summer and to the Mediterranean in the winter. But she married away from home, neglected her father, and had but little communication with him. She went away to England and Russia. Then her husband, who was engaged in extensive stock speculations in Paris, lost all that he had and committed suicide. The daughter was left with nothing.

Her father, very wealthy, was still in Rich-

mond. She wrote to him, saying that she had nothing for herself and her little boy, and asked if he was willing to help her. The somewhat eccentric father, who was, after all, very wise, replied that he would be glad to help her, but that he would keep an account of all that he gave her, and that she must send to him a requisition for everything she wanted, which he would be glad to fill. After he had brought up one daughter and had failed the old man had learned something, and he made up his mind to begin anew. So, to the surprise of his daughter and to the surprise of her friends, who blamed him somewhat at first, he required his daughter to set down on paper, in the form of that requisition, every single article of clothing, or food, everything that was needed in the housekeeping, and everything in the shape of the necessities of life, that were required for her and for her little child. She would carefully prepare this long list, which sometimes would take many hours to make out, and her father would send her the very articles that she sent for and nothing over.

She returned to his home in Richmond, and there, after her mother's death, became his housekeeper, and continued in that position until the old man's death, some twenty

years later, and all the while she was held to a strict account for everything. She learned to love her father exceedingly. She began to appreciate what he had done for her. Because everything given her was put down in writing for the scrutiny of her careful father, she was grateful for the least thing, even for a paper of pins.

Can you not see, in the behaviour of that wise parent, something of the differences that exist between the children who are ungrateful and the children who are grateful, whether they be children of men or children of God? If we could sit down and make a list, before God, of the things we want and were obliged to sit down and say, "Lord, give us this, or that, or the other," we would understand the value of our gifts, and would appreciate the kindness of the parent who gave them. How much more we would love him and praise him than we do now!

But "how to pray" involves some questions so deep that I cannot enter upon their discussion here. Yet there is one thought in connection with the best way to pray which I think I should advance. Of late there has been found a growing heresy in the church, which states that there are no such things as miracles. Men cannot believe that the Lord

would change His mind, and so they say it is useless to pray. Whether the Lord changes His mind or not is a question far beyond our finite reasoning. We cannot understand the mind of God, and he is a very venturesome egotist who assumes to judge what God thinks and what He does not. We see some things in nature which God does, and which seem to indicate a change of mind or a change of purpose. We believe in an unchangeable God; yet when you take a seed that is grown to perfection, with the evident design that it shall grow into a tree, and when we find that in the providence of God it decays or fails to germinate, we see a plan that has failed, or, looking at the question superficially, we see a change of mind in the providence of God. The merely scientific mind must accept that evidence.

A child is born into the earth, and in two or three days it dies and its body is laid back in the dust. That body was formed for living, that brain for thinking, those hands for working, those feet for walking, that heart for pumping. Those are the apparent plans of God with regard to that child, and it must appear to any truly scientific mind that God changes His mind, or changes His providence, when that child dies; the plan for which it seems to have been born fails.

The great lakes of the North ran for ages over Niagara only and mingled with the Atlantic Ocean by passing through the St. Lawrence. But man comes in and changes the plans of God, digs the great Chicago canal, reverses the flow of the Chicago River, and now water that otherwise would pass through the St. Lawrence turns to the Mississippi River and finds its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Has God changed His mind? Whether He has changed or has turned His attention to further designs is not of vital importance to discuss, but that the seeming designs of God are often defeated is evident to any purely scientific mind.

We find that God has given to man a free will; within a limited range, it is true, but within that range man is allowed to interfere with the evident purposes of God. God has His designs, as the Scriptures and nature plainly show. Man has the power to destroy life or to change the nature of life by interbreeding, and by various forms of cultivation he can change the very nature of the vegetation of the earth, God's designs being subject to the power of man. It is God's will that we should come unto Him, and that none should perish; it is His purpose that man should live a holy and a righteous life.

But man, in the exercise of his free will, interferes with those plans. God designs that man shall be pure and good; but man comes in with his temptations, his deceit and his fraud and seemingly overcomes or defeats the very purpose of God.

We believe that it is God's purpose that the Gospel should be preached, and yet man defeats and defeats, postpones and postpones the time when the world shall hear the Gospel of God.

But if God does not change His mind—and I do not think that He does—then we may account for this philosophically upon another line. Does God foresee that man will interfere? Ah, there the teacher who says that God does not hear the prayers of man, and does not change His mind, is altogether at fault as a scientific man. For the God who made the seed may have designed it to die, and no change of mind or of purpose has taken place, for God may have foreseen that certain events would come to pass, and His designs are carried out by its use in another direction. God may know in advance what the influence of man will be on His plans, and He makes His plans accordingly, without consulting us in the matter.

However, if we go to the Scriptures, which as Christians we must, we find that God does

answer prayer, that He answers prayer directly, that His providence changes in order to adjust itself to the conditions created by the prayers of His Christian children. We are told to be instant in prayer, to pray without ceasing, to pray unto God our Father which is in heaven, who seeth in secret and who shall reward us openly. There are one hundred and twenty-seven different commandments to pray.

But if we would learn the power or the best way to pray we need to begin with nothing. I think only the poor can understand how to pray. In the instance that I mentioned at the opening of this thought, that daughter knew how to pray to her father after she had learned to appreciate his itemized goodness. A rich man can scarcely know how to pray, and that may be the reason why it is so difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; it is because he does not know what he should be thankful for. It is the poor man who is in the best position to understand the blessings of God. Let a man live from mouth to mouth, not knowing from where his next meal is coming, he is so dependent upon God's providence that he can appreciate His goodness in detail. He only can so arrange his prayer as to test God.

A man living in luxury can hardly know the power of prayer. He cannot believe God would change His mind. But the poor man, like George Müller, of England, who lived through years of great Christian work, simply from hour to hour, can understand the power of prayer. When he needed a thing he asked for it. He studied closely the answers to his prayers, and on a question of that kind a man like George Müller is a safer scientific authority than mere college professors. If those scientific men have been themselves in a position where it was either death, or an answer, and if then they prayed, they may be considered to be authorities on the subject. But school science in itself is of no authority on the practical question of prayer. It is something which can only be tested by experience. If a daughter makes out a list of what she wants and sends it to her father and her father sends back precisely what she asked for, then that daughter knows that her father has answered her ; some scientific man may come along and say that he does not believe that her father "would change his mind," yet the practical truth of the answer is demonstrated. We know that God answers prayer by the fact that we ask for what we want and we get what we have asked for.

While prayer is often answered indirectly, or in some unexpected way, yet the frequency with which we do get what we ask for will assure the humble Christian in his poverty that prayer, if it does not change the mind of God, is at least heard by the Almighty ruler of the world; and those who live from hand to mouth, not because of their laziness, but because of misfortune, they are the people who are in the position to test the value of prayer. If God does not change His plans or His designs, He does work out an answer to prayer in one direction or another.

Dr. George M. Baker told once about a prayer which he made when he was a boy, asking God that he might go to a baseball game. His mother did not wish him to go in consequence of the character of the crowd that would be there. But he prayed three times that his mother might change her mind. He could not understand why she still stood to her original position. He went back to his work and began to think. He thought of how his mother loved him much more than any of the boys loved him, and how he loved her more than he loved them. So at last he began to feel that he did not care to go to the game; and he went and told his mother so, and told her that he had

given up the idea. He would not go if she gave him permission, for he would prefer to stay at home and help her. His prayer was answered, although not in the way he expected—not by permitting him to go to the ball game, but by reconciling him to stay at home. Dr. Baker's lovely and potent life was largely shaped by that prayer.

General Gordon, of Atlanta, Ga., told me of how the Confederate troops prayed for victory before the battle of Sharpsburg. The day before the battle they prayed earnestly that they might be victorious, so earnestly that both officers and men felt that their prayers would be answered. General Gordon said that many felt satisfied that the Confederate forces would sweep the Union lines, and would be on their way to Washington within a week. But the next day the battle came off, and in results it was one of the most crushing blows that the Confederates received during the war. General Gordon, who was shot five times, said that after the battle the men were discouraged. They felt that God was on the side of the largest legions. Some of the officers suggested that it would be better to spend less time in praying and more time in manufacturing powder and bullets. The suggestion seemed to be a good

one even to the general. But he told me years after that the prayers of the Confederates on the day before that battle were best answered by defeat; that if the Confederates had captured Washington and defeated the Union our nation would now be far down the scale among the weaker nations of the earth. So God answers prayer in His own way.

The text chosen for this address relates to the prayer of Elijah. You will remember that he had prayed that there might be no rain for three years, and his prayer had been answered. What had been the result? For years there had been no rain, and what scenes do his eyes rest upon? He sees the funeral processions on every hand; the little ones are dead and the older ones are dying; the fields are white with ashes, and a pestilence is on the land. To punish Jezebel and Ahab he had prayed that there might be no rain. But Ahab and Jezebel do not suffer. Their great wealth enables them to find pasture for their flocks, and the suffering is felt by the poorer people, and they consistently blame Elijah for their afflictions. The lesson that he desired to teach Jezebel was not being taught except to the poor, whom he did not desire to punish. He considered it his duty so to pray. But he seems now to feel that

he may have made a mistake in his desire to teach the lessons of God. He feels responsible for the suffering that has followed as a result of his prayers. When a man prays to God, if his prayer is answered, the man who prays is responsible for the results that follow. But now Elijah is filled with remorse. How I wish I could present to you this morning the picture of Elijah up on Mount Carmel praying, with his head bowed before God, praying for rain! Oh, for rain to make the fields fertile; oh, that these funeral processions might cease; oh, to hear no more of these cries and groanings; oh, to hear no more the curses of the people! "It is thou who troubleth Israel." Oh, that these multiplying graves may no longer fill the land with woe! Elijah feels his responsibility, and with his whole heart he now prays to God for rain. Hear the poor man praying for rain: "O God, help me out of this awful dilemma! O God, Thou didst answer my prayer that it might not rain, but now, O Lord, send rain." But no rain comes and he sends his servant to look out to sea. He was in haste to know if there was an answer coming to his prayer. A man may say that he does not believe in prayer. But if that is the case his first prayer should be for faith in prayer; his first duty is

to get himself in a position or in a condition where he will have sufficient faith to pray in the proper spirit. Elijah, while he prays, seems doubtful about the result, and he sends his servant up the mountain to look around. Elijah feels that God must answer his prayer. Hence he sends his servant up higher that he may get a wider view.

Now there are two ways in which to learn how to pray: one is to go down to the poor who depend upon God from hour to hour, and make that the test of its effectiveness; and the other way is to do as Elijah did, either send your servant or yourself, go up higher and take a wider view. Go up where you can see something of the providence and the plan of God. The servant of Elijah knew not from which direction the rain would come. He may have been looking over the land; he may have been looking over the Mediterranean; he may have been looking towards Jerusalem, or he may have been looking to the north towards Hermon, or down towards the valley too close by, or more likely he had been looking at the ground where Elijah was, with the hope that a fountain might spring up at his feet. But Elijah tells him to go up higher, where he can get a wider view.

III

FOOD FOR THE POOR

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his heart of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (*1 John iii. 17.*)

IT is evident to every student of the progress of the human race, as well as to every student of the Holy Scriptures, that the providences of God are building up a great final brotherhood of all mankind. That the day is approaching very rapidly, is the belief of many of us, when all men shall have the Gospel of Christ, shall believe in the principles taught in His word, and when they shall all be at peace; and when there shall be only one nation over the entire world, and that nation one great, loving family, or brotherhood. We are progressing towards it by almost every day's history. The changes that are going on in these later years are so rapid as to bewilder a man. Growing nearer together by every mechanical device, by all the avenues of commerce, and by all the inventions of genius, we must

be one family; that is the ultimate logical result of the progress of the years.

In the accomplishment of this great purpose, God is disciplining us by contests of all kinds. He is compelling us to go through very sharp battles in order that in the victory we may be strong. He gives mental discipline, soul and moral teachings that will tend in every case to fit us better for the great brotherhood into which we or our following generations are going. Competition, battle, warfare attract the attention of the human mind first of all things. Yet mankind believes in fair contests. We speak of the Englishman who believes in fair play, but he doesn't believe in it more than other nations do. It is a common trait of humanity everywhere. We believe in the fight, in the contest, but we also believe in fair play.

Men gather by the tens of thousands to see a baseball game, and they insist that it shall be played fairly. An unfair game disgusts the entire audience, and an unfair decision brings very unpleasant feeling. The constitution of human nature requires that the game shall be very close, and the closer the contest, the more doubt as to which shall win, the greater the pleasure of the people who attend. They do not gather for

the ball game itself, because if one could play alone there would be no audience there at all. When a team goes out to practice, to play by themselves, few people attend. It is only when the human mind is centred on a peculiarly narrow contest that there comes excitement and great attraction. When ball games are played in every state in the United States, and one club after another is eliminated until at last it comes down to two teams which represent the whole land, and those two can play with such accuracy, skill and equal strength that no person can tell which shall win, and when it may be that the mere turning of a ball, a mere single bat will decide the result, then thousands go, and the gate money amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is because the contest is fair and close.

People do not go to see an automobile run alone ; but if there are two, rated just alike, built by two competing firms, having the same power, with drivers of the same skill, and they run head to head, it is an exciting thing. It is in the nature of us all to enjoy a contest of that character. A horse-race, where nose to nose they go by the grand stand, excites the people and brings about great applause. When they build yachts in

England to compete with ours, they must be so rated and so constructed as to make it very doubtful which shall win. From such contests comes the greatest skill, the greatest development of a noble character.

The aviator who first went across the continent performed one of the greatest miracles of the ages. If Christ had done that they would have thought it was a miracle then, equal perhaps to many of the minor miracles which He performed. But, if one man goes over alone there is very little said about it. I have seen a notice of the feat in papers and magazines, but it is a perfect wonder that such a thing could be done and the people say so little about it. But if you had started two aviators, with the same experience, in flying machines of the same size, at the same moment, from New York, and they had kept within a few minutes of each other crossing the Rocky Mountains, there would have been tremendous excitement over the entire nation and world as they went; and if they had landed within one second of each other the world would never have forgotten the wonderful achievement. It is a singular thing in human nature, but there it is. God seems to have put it there, anyhow He is dealing with it every day of our lives. A man may

climb a mountain, and it is a wonderful achievement, but it is only when several undertake it and their time of reaching the mountain peak is within a few minutes of each other, that people remember the contest. But human nature requires that it shall be an honourable battle. They require that it shall be a swimming match, and not the drowning of a man. No one wants to see a man drown, or see him battling uselessly with the waves. There must be a contest, a battle. It must be a war, not a massacre.

I say, then, in order to become brothers in this world, we require development along the line of fairness of character. A sailor would not sail the sea if there were no storms or high waves, or if he did he would become effeminate. Pioneers going into the forest and levelling trees are strong men physically and mentally, and make their marks upon the ages as did Washington. They have their battles to fight, but battles bring victories, victories bring strength, and strength brings the esteem and honour of mankind, and seemingly the favour of God.

We read a curious thing in the Bible that there was war in heaven. What a battle that must have been! What a sight to look upon a battle of the angels! We do not

know enough about it to let our imagination fly; but this we do know, that we are on the earth, where there is a continual battle going on between righteousness and unrighteousness, between goodness and wickedness, and all for a purpose. The battle is ever present. Evil and goodness are always facing each other, there is never a time when one can lower flag or sword. The battle is always on; and it is God's intention that it should be on for the discipline of mankind. We are called upon to come to the help of the Lord and fight with Him the battles for His cause,—yet not so much for Him as for ourselves. Our battles as a church, as Christian believers, are on. We do not know why the Lord did not fight them all out for us, or why, with His supreme power, He did not do away with evil and exterminate the bad. We know they are here. We meet them all the time. Some persons may try to believe that everything is good, but you will soon find out, by the use of ordinary common sense for a single five minutes, that evil is everywhere present all the time. The contest is ever on, just as it is in the bodies of men. There are white corpuscles that are the great valiant soldiers of health, circulating through the body and fighting your

battles. The more you have of such scavengers the healthier your system will be. But it is a battle never ceasing. Every breath you take, every mouthful of food you receive, every time you go to sleep, and every muscle you exercise, the nerve that you put in force is only acting upon them; and the great battle in your body is always on between the germs of disease and the microbes of health. So everywhere the battle is hot against evil. We do not know why it is so, but nevertheless our common sense, as well as our conscience, teaches that it is a fact.

The battle of the Church for the salvation of the souls of men is always in array. Men are as prone to do evil as sparks are to fly upward, and they are ever in the presence of temptation and sin; and God has set us in the earth to fight this continual battle, to defend those weaker than we, and to strengthen us that we may battle for ourselves and those we love. The great battle of the Church is, of course, the battle for the conversion of mankind to Jesus Christ. That is the great, chief, moral purpose of our living. Satan is ever trying to tempt the soul away from the Church, away from Christ and goodness, away from purity and holiness; and we are ever striving, if we are doing our duty, to

keep him from making it a prisoner. We have the world in charge, and are formed into a phalanx of God for the fighting of His battles, and all heaven is interested in this great and nearly equal struggle. If it were not nearly equal it would be no battle, or, at least, a dishonourable one. Right and wrong are so near alike, Satan and Christ seem to be so equal in this earth of ours, that we cannot tell from day to day which way the battle will swerve, or which way victory seems to go. We believe that in the end Christ and God will be victorious, but to-day it is a battle that is ever present and undecided, and the world ought to take as great an interest in this moral and religious battle as it does in the physical battles of the world.

It is the duty of the Church to convert the rich, because now the rich are getting more and more of wealth than their share, and the weath is being taken away from the good of humanity; so the Church, in order to fight the battles for God, must strive by every possible means to convert the rich to Jesus Christ, to secure a change of their hearts that they may love to do good with their money, that they may use the power they have to bless humanity. The Church needs to use its

power to convert the poor, in order that the poor may not be discouraged with their condition, in order that the poor may be more industrious and more economical, and in order that the poor may receive their equal share. The time is coming when there will be a universal brotherhood; and when that time does come there will be no man richer than another. Men will all be alike around this ideal world. Now we are not socialistic, as some people interpret socialism; we are not anarchists; we do not believe in the destruction of property, or of nations, if that may be; but we believe in the equalizing of the possessions of the rich and the poor; and we believe in bringing it about in Christ's own way, and that way is an honourable way. Let us fight the battles with the rich honourably, though they may seem tyrannous and oppressive, for the heart revolts against anything like a victory with unfair methods, and Christianity rejects it. Hence to-day, as a Church of Jesus Christ, we are brought face to face around this wide world, with great problems to solve, or great battles to fight in favour of the poor.

Why should there be poor, who are so hungry that they eat the refuse out of garbage barrels? Why is it that there should

be any person begging his way in this great city when there are millions and millions of gold in the banks, and when there are thousands of persons unoccupied who would delight to minister to the poor? Why are these things as they are? Why are the millions in the hands of the few, and poverty in the homes of the many? The fact that it is so I have not time to discuss. I have come to make a very practical proposition, and say that it is time for the churches to take up the battle in behalf of the poor. The whole country is feeling that this condition is wrong, and that the great trusts which have been combined with such capital should be somehow dealt with to prevent their future encroachments upon the poor.

Why is it that the poor man finds the cost of living continually rising while his pay is so slow in rising? Why is it that the coffers of the rich are being filled with a continual stream which they do not earn? If you go out on Broad Street you will see automobiles by the thousands. They go up and down so fast that life is endangered. Who builds the automobiles? The poor men. Do you think the rich men own those automobiles? You have not thought very far if you do. The rich man wants an automobile to use for

himself; how is he going to get the money to buy it? He owns property in which poor people dwell, and he raises the rent, and out of the added rent of the poor man he pays for his automobile. The automobiles begin to run through a town. The people are all poor, and the automobiles so use up the highways as almost to tax the people out of town and nearly devastate the entire village by the great ruin which they do to the streets. So they put the poor people to the great expense of building new roads over which automobiles can run. Who lays this pavement on Broad Street? The poor people of Philadelphia. Whose rents are raised and the price of whose living is raised in order that the city may spend its money laying pavement for the automobiles to run over?

It is not that I would put back the age and say automobiles should not exist. I would not take away one of them; but I use this illustration that you may realize to-day that the poor are growing poorer and the rich richer. I ask you what the Church of Jesus Christ has to do with the raising of the cost of living, and what it should do to prevent it. It seems to me it is time now for something practical to be done. I know that we are a spiritual organization. Christ was a great

teacher, but He went around doing good. He went around healing the sick; and while He preached the Gospel all the time, He enforced the Gospel by His wondrous example. Let us try to do the same thing. Let us try to teach the combinations of poor men, as well as the rich. Let us try to encourage every sort of association that will bring the poor together in a trust; for when bad men combine good men must organize. The time has come when we must meet these trusts with trusts, and not only limit them by law, which must be done with great care that we be not unjust to any one, but at the same time prevent any future encroachment.

A short time ago there came up in Indiana a very simple proposition. It would seem almost absurd when put in connection with the beauties and glories of spiritual teaching, and yet it is something the Church ought to do. Out in Indianapolis the mayor of the town, Mr. Shank, saw that the poor people were having their cost of living raised all the time. (The rich people did not do without anything; they never do. If the cost is a little more they buy it anyhow. Whatever they want they get.) He saw that in his city there were thousands of poor people, and while their pay was advanced somewhat over

its previous amount, it was not advanced in proportion to the increased cost of living. So he went into the market and asked the price of potatoes, and they said, "A dollar and a half a bushel." It was more than that if people bought them by the peck. Just think of the coal that is sold in this city to the poor by the basket and pound, at a rate which (if rich people paid the same) would pay the interest on all property of the city itself. Just one article, and they pay so much more for a ton of coal than rich people. The rich can buy it for three dollars and twenty cents a ton. I know that because I have bought it for institutions. You pay five, six and seven dollars, and the poor man in the city pays twelve dollars. Why is it that they pay more and thus raise their cost of living? It is because the rich man has the capital to pay cash down. He not only gets it at the lowest rate, but gets a discount for cash within ten or thirty days. Business is ever in favour of the rich. When the mayor of Indianapolis found that the poor people were paying one dollar and a half a bushel for potatoes, and that those who bought them by the peck were paying more, he made a combine with some of the Christian men of the city and sent to Michigan for a carload of

potatoes, and sold them to the people at the actual cost, plus the transportation. He sold them for seventy-five cents a bushel, and then he had an offer from a town in Colorado of potatoes delivered in Indianapolis for sixty-six cents a bushel, with no expense attached beyond delivery there.

One of the great disadvantages in helping the poor in that way is in the fact that they have become proud and try to imitate the rich. They do not go to market as they did in the old days. God bless the good old market basket! It makes one's heart leap for joy to think of the pleasures and treasures that were connected with it. You remember dear old grandma going down to the market and picking out herself the things that were so luscious and so cheap. She never found any fault with the price of what she bought when she brought them home. She saved part of the market money to buy a good many things her husband never knew anything about, because she always furnished the house so well and so loaded the table with luxuries. Oh, magnificent old day when the women were willing to go to market! But the time has come that the poor woman telephones for a peck of potatoes and wishes them delivered done up in beauti-

ful papers in order that they may come into the house as if they were treasures bought from a department store. She wants everything brought in with expense added to it, and that pride has much to do with the high cost.

The Temple University has three or four thousand students, representing three thousand different families. If the trustees of that one institution bought the potatoes for those families and sold them for cost in this city, it would be a great Christian deed, and would much reduce the cost of living to the poor. We would not buy potatoes to sell to the rich. They would be bought by the trainload, and, with cost of delivery added, sold at cost to the poor. If we could deliver potatoes guaranteed to be entirely whole, from the most luscious production of the country, for sixty-one cents a bushel, we would be doing the poor some practical good. It would be a direct good deed. It would be such a miracle as Christ performed for the good of the poor in His day. The difficulty in our way, perhaps, is the middleman between the potato field and the people who buy them. It is a very significant fact that the potato crop in this country last year netted the farmer a little less than

$6,000,000, and took from the consumer over $17,000,000. The intervening millions were made by the people who act between—the "middlemen." The farmer is not near enough to the consumer; the consumer is not near enough to the manufacturer; and hence these middlemen are now a necessity. But I appeal in the name of the Master, in the name of the poor, to the middleman to take up some great staple which the poor need and bring it to them at the barest cost over the producer, that the poor of our city may be fed, that they may be clothed, and that the poor may be given a more equal advantage in their battle with the rich.

Christianity takes up the lowest and lifts him to the equal of the highest. Christianity teaches the rich man to give of his millions that he may not rise higher in his selfishness and covetousness. Christianity teaches the poor man to be industrious, and teaches him when he does receive help from the rich that he ought to use it to the best advantage for the promotion of his family. Christianity brings the poor up, and the rich down. Oh, that Magnificat of Mary, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree." That is the purpose of Christianity, to save us, and to make us

equal, to show us how to be brothers all on the same plane. In order to accomplish this let us begin now. The poor are ever ringing our door-bells. We meet them on the streets, on the corners: "Give to me, I am poor; give me, I am suffering; give me, I am sick." The thing for us to do is not so much to help the individual case, though that should be done, as it is to set in motion some great movement for the union of all good men and women in behalf of the Lord's poor. Let us, friends, as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, "go about doing good."

IV

IT PAYS TO GIVE TO GOD

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him!" (*Matt. vii. 11.*)

I HAVE received helpful hints for the text of this address in the numbers of people who have communicated with me concerning the little incident I mentioned in a previous discourse, in which I said that a man in Massachusetts, who had only one dollar in his pocket, and who wished to find work, went to the church and put fifty cents of that dollar in the box as an offering to God. Then with only fifty cents in his pocket, he went on hunting for work. He found an advertisement which said there were wanted labourers of his class in Marlborough, Massachusetts. At the ticket office he found that the price of a ticket to Marlborough was exactly a dollar, and that if he had the fifty cents back which he gave to the church he could have paid his fare and secured the work. Being unable to buy a through ticket,

he decided to buy as far as fifty cents would go and walk the rest of the way. So he left the cars at South Framingham and started to walk to Marlborough, on the country road. He approached a gentleman to inquire the way, and the gentleman told him that there was a man who wanted help in South Framingham. He went around the block and was given a salary of five dollars a week more than the other situation offered, and he is now himself one of the wealthy men of Massachusetts. He is giving ten per cent. of his income regularly to the Lord's work, and this year he has concluded to build with his ten per cent. a sixty-thousand-dollar shoe factory and give the entire income of the factory to the employees. That incident brought out letters in which I have found very interesting and pertinent inquiries.

There is a universal belief in the human heart everywhere, heathen and Christian, that there is something to be gained by making an offering to the Lord. In heathen countries I have often seen people bringing their tributes to the temples and placing them before the idols or giving them to the priests. In every land there is an impression, natural to the soul, and a part of human thinking and feeling, that there is, somehow, some-

thing to be gained from the mysterious providence of God by making some offering to these wonderful powers, whether they are understood as our God, or as heathen goods. It is in nature, it is in the very constitution of man, it is a truth of God, as deep as our conscience, that there is something to be gained by offerings.

"To be good is to be happy," says the philosopher who cares nothing for the religious side of Scriptural truth. All make offerings to these powers, to win good fortune, to secure good luck! The gambler believes in that. He will not gamble at a certain hour on Friday; he will not use certain numbers; he wants 4-11-44 in some sort of combination in order to win his game at Monte Carlo. High and low, all alike, believe in some measure in the power of offerings.

This thought has been brought to my attention by these communications, especially in two or three instances. One gentleman writes me that he, by accident, put a five-dollar gold piece in the basket instead of a five-cent piece. It was a surprise to me to find that a man intended to put in a five-cent piece, because usually the gift is one cent. In this congregation we get about thirty-two hundred pennies in the collection every Sunday

night. But this man intended to give five cents, and instead of that accidentally took out a five-dollar gold piece and put it into the basket. I haven't any question but that the trustees expected the man to come after it, as he usually does. But this man was too proud to confess that he did not give the five dollars. He says he needed that five dollars very much the next day, when his wife came to him and wanted the usual market money on Monday. He said, "Wife, I have not got it." She said, "What have you done with that five dollars which you had on Friday?" He said, "I—I—I gave it to the church." She was surprised at his religious fervour, as she had not expected anything of the kind from him. But he did not confess to her but that he actually intended to give the five dollars. He said, "Wife, I think we ought to give more than we do," and defended himself by arguing in that way. In this letter he writes that the loss of that five dollars compelled them to be very economical that week and to cut down somewhat. His wife said to him, "We ought to cut down in our living. Didn't you hear Mr. Conwell say that the simplest, healthiest, best breakfast that was provided in the old country consisted of rolls, coffee and a boiled egg? Now," she

said, "let us try that for breakfast." This gentleman writes me that he is delighted that they have made the change. Before they had ham and beefsteak and every variety of things for breakfast, which sent him out with the dyspepsia nearly every day. He says he has come back to the good old-fashioned English breakfast of rolls and coffee and an egg. He says it does not cost him ten per cent. of what the previous breakfasts cost, and he calculates that he has made at least two hundred and fifty dollars a year by having put that five dollars in the contribution basket.

We say that he should not have had the credit of that. The Lord saw that he intended to give only five cents, yet we find it working out a purpose in the providence of God. I do not think that it affected his family half as much as it will affect other families, as it will affect the preaching and teaching of the Gospel.

One man said that he put two dollars in the basket one morning, when we were taking a collection for missionary work, because he had no change. He had taken his pocketbook out, and he did not want the people around him to see him put it back when he had bills in it, and the smallest

thing he had was a two-dollar note. He writes to me that the next day he lacked a dollar and some cents of the change necessary to pay a bill which came to his door. So he told the man he did not have quite enough, and that he would come down to the store and pay him there. Down to the store he went to pay it. In the store was a salesman selling a certain class of goods he himself thought he would like to represent. He talked with the salesman, went down to the place which the man represented, and has now gone to work for the concern for which the salesman was at work who was trying to sell goods in the store where he went to pay his bill.

Many others have written in kindred ways. All of them ask, "Now, do you believe that you can make a bargain with the Lord and put five dollars in the contribution basket and get out twenty-five dollars? If you do, I will put in five dollars every Sunday." That, I think, is in the public mind; that thought is in the heart of some Christians, that they can bargain with the Lord, that if they give, the Scriptures teach that they will receive a hundredfold more in this present time. Now, what the Scriptures do promise is that he who gives shall receive a hun-

dredfold in this present time, on two conditions. The first condition is that he shall give without an intention to bargain. A man cannot experiment with God. It is impossible. If you try you must fail, because it must be given with the spirit of consecration and worship if the giver is to receive a hundredfold more.

You give to your child without any thought of your child paying you back. I saw a scene that filled my heart with tenderness that ran over from my eyes, this week. I saw in a station an old man being helped along so tenderly by his daughter. Oh, she took such good care of her old father! I knew that family when they were poor in Somerville, Massachusetts, and I know that that child, when born into that family, was an added burden to their poverty, and that the old man worked hard to take care of that child. But his heart was large and his purpose good, and he sacrificed for her all the time and gave her money. He did not give her money and attention, and watch her so affectionately, after her mother's death, because he was going to be paid back! Oh, no! But now, oh, the blessing that God has sent to him, to have a child standing by his side and directing his tottering steps with

such exhibition of love. He is paid back a thousandfold for all that he did for God. For when one does for love, pure and simple, he works for God anywhere, not only in the church, but anywhere else.

So I thought I would speak to you upon the good gifts of God. If a man makes his offering to God and makes his prayer at the time in the right spirit, the promise is that he shall receive a hundredfold more in this present time. What is it he shall receive? He may receive gold. You know that Paul Gogan, of Montreal, Canada, lived to be one hundred and eight years old. He was going down the coast of the St. Lawrence River, and he had given away all that he had to help those poor people up in the woods. He was going out with a brave heart and strong hand to earn some more. As he was seeking his way he saw upon the shore two chests of gold, washed up from the ship that had been wrecked there in the day of General Montcalm. Those were his treasure trove; that was God's treasure, put in his hand, and he had plenty of money for his lifetime, and his children still enjoy the fruits of it. That was God's gift put right before him—gift of gold. God does return gold a hundredfold more to some who give to Him. Yet He

may return it in cattle, which He says are His on a thousand hills ; He may return it in land, in houses ; He may return it in beautiful garments ; He may return it as He did to Job ; He may return it as He did to Abraham, or to Solomon, or to Paul. God's treasures are multifarious. Beautiful treasures of the snow ! The snow-storm may be an answer to your gift. The hail-storm may come in answer to what you have offered ; the sunshine may come, beautiful and bright, in answer to your petition. You say you cannot change nature. You do not need to do it. The great and wise God can adjust His sunshine to your need and your need to His sunshine.

One of God's greatest gifts is a good name.

An incident flashes back on my thought now. A young man—a middle-aged man now—was arrested for stealing, of which he was guilty. He was sent to the House of Correction for one or two years. After he came out he reformed in every way, was a Christian young man, and worked and laboured to live down the disgrace of it. He was engaged to be married to a young woman, and the question came to his conscience, whether he ought to tell her he was once in prison. Some day she might find it

out if he did not; it worried him and troubled him much; it was a question whether he ought not for her sake to keep it altogether to himself. But he had to obey his conscience. He told her frankly that he had been in prison years before, for stealing, of which he was guilty. She thought of her parents, and how they would feel if they found out she had married a convict; so she ventured to tell her mother about it, and then the family turned against him and turned her from him, and he works on alone without wife and domestic life, because he had a bad name. The Scriptures say a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. Yet God may preserve a good name for a man who makes an offering to Him, and so give him the greatest possible treasure.

There is a treasure in love that God gives greater than money, beyond the estimation of any jewel. There is a treasure in friends that God confers in answer to our offering. God again and again insists that wisdom is His greatest gift in any earthly matter. He gives wisdom to men. They know more, they think more, they live more, because they give to Him. It may not return in money. Money might be the greatest dross in a return from God. God, who sees best and knows

most, will give us what is best for our good, and He may be giving us wisdom instead of money; He may be giving us skill as He often has done in answer to the petitions of men; He may be giving us beauty of person and beauty of character and beauty of spirit and beauty of soul, which is above all possible price. He may be giving to us on Christmas another boy or girl to feed, and we think that He is cursing us with care and burden instead of bringing to us joy; and yet His gifts, that seem at the time to be a burden, may prove to be the most wonderful treasury of riches that ever came to our house. God gives conscience; washes our consciences clean and white. God's gift to Elijah, the greatest gift that ever came to him, was that means of communication by which he could recognize the spirit of God and follow its precepts, knowing for certain that he was being led of God.

I would give more at this moment for that one thing than for all the earth has for me. Oh, to know for certain that God's spirit and providence accurately takes my steps and leads me in the very best way, where I may do the most good! I consecrate myself again, I put myself before Him again, and nothing under the high heavens, of gold or of

ambition, or of personal pleasure, or of friends or love shall stand between me and the leadership of my God. I would give more to have the certain assurance that He will lead me, and that I shall make no error, that I shall be everywhere in such a relation as to do the most good to the greatest number all the days that are left to me, than for all the hundredfold more of gold or lands or cattle or houses or name.

When Andrew Jackson went from the presidency back to his home in Tennessee he had had wealth, he had had the highest position the nation could give to him, but there, in the privacy of retired life, he read the Bible and he sought the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave his heart to the Saviour, and went around continually proclaiming that of all the treasures that life had brought to him from his humble life up to the presidency, there was no treasure so valuable as the pearl of greatest possible price, the sense of God's salvation in his heart. Andrew Jackson was right about it; he died in the simplicity of faith, with his friends around his bedside, telling them that above all price was the gift of salvation, above all value the holy Book, and urging them to love God and serve Him and meet him in heaven. God's treasures

are better than ours; He knows what is more for our good than anything else. A man may make an offering to God, and instead of getting back money, or friends, or position, he may find his heart interested in the cause of Christ and God, may surrender to its influence, and come into the glory of everlasting life. The greatest pearl, the most valuable jewel in all God's gifts, has often come to him who made his offering to God, while his heart naturally followed his gift, to see what would become of it, and then God blessed him with everlasting life.

V

GRACEFULNESS

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (*2 Cor. xiii. 14.*)

THERE are some people who ought to ride in an automobile. A romantic little fact that might have been taken out of a book illustrates this text. Two years ago, out at Franklin, Pennsylvania, there lived a miner who was dependent somewhat upon his son-in-law and his daughter, as he was old and alone in the world and could earn only a part of what was necessary for his maintenance. The old man felt grieved that he must depend upon his son-in-law, and mentioned it often. The son-in-law said but little, while he probably did feel the burden of it, as he also was dependent upon his day's wages. The daughter was unhappy in the home, because she felt that her husband was supporting her father, and that when she married her husband he "did not marry the whole family." There was a feeling in the hearts of all in that fam-

ily which every reader probably can appreciate.

Finally the old father went down to Texas, and a year ago he was given a piece of land for his services there in organizing a company, and on that land are fast-gushing wells of oil. That father came back to Franklin, not having communicated with his daughter. He came back in the same suit which he wore when he went from the door, ragged, without a collar, his hair uncombed, the same old hat, only more worn. As he came in, dejected, solemn and ragged, in the old clothes, his daughter greeted him cheerfully and kindly, asked if she should get him something to eat, and if he did not "want a cup of tea," and seemed sincerely glad to see him home. Said he: "Daughter, I have come home to you again. Your old father has come back to see if you are willing to take care of him the rest of his life. Your old father has made up his mind that he cannot work any more; he cannot earn anything now." The daughter said: "Father, we have not even as much as we had when you went away, but what little we do have I am sure that my husband and I will be glad to divide with you." And the old man clasped her and said: "My daughter, my

daughter, they say that Christ sometimes comes to the home in rags and asks for help, and that old story I heard when I was in Germany in my youth has brought me home in these rags. I won't make you feel so bad another minute, my daughter. Henceforth you shall ride in an automobile." They have moved to Pittsburgh, and it was from Pittsburgh friends that I heard this incident, and at the East End they are now constructing a fine mansion. We are glad she can ride in an automobile.

There are daughters who would have welcomed their fathers with a scowl. They would have said: "We cannot take care of you. You must go to the poorhouse. We cannot take care of all our relations." There are people who would have said that, and perhaps some of them ride in automobiles; I hope they will not ride there long. But the touching incident I have related is mentioned to show that the daughter had grace —the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ! What is grace? It seems to be sought by the apostles more than almost anything else, and the last thing they said at parting, as it was the first thing they said when they opened their meetings, was, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you." Praying for

grace. How beautifully it was exhibited in that poor daughter's life when her father came in his rags and she thought he would be the object of their charity. How hard it is to define real grace, especially the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is the beauty, the halo, the added things which do not constitute the necessities of human life.

To be without grace is to be in a dwelling with no flower in the window; to be in a school with no picture; a church with no stained glass windows; a street with no shady trees; a cathedral with no arches; a park with no flowers; youth without beauty; sunset without colour, and love without a smile. To have grace is to have a shine on your shoes, a tailor's cut to your clothing, a ribbon at your neck, a white cloth on your table, a painting on your wall, decorated china on your sideboard, a rug on the floor, a rose in your yard, paint on your fence, ornaments in your church. To be graceful is to move delicately and easily, to dress daintily, to speak appropriately, to think beautiful ideas, to be in place, to be sweetly generous and sincerely polite. He who would have grace must work overtime, give more than the contract, do better than the

model, furnish goods finer than the sample, go farther than he is asked, teach more than the text-book, think beyond his occupation, love more than his own family, be willing to decrease while others increase, be continually doing unexpected and unrequired acts of kindness. God's grace includes all that which gives us more than we deserve. Our grace includes all we do for others' good which we are not compelled to do and are not paid for doing.

That, in a manner, touches this difficult word "grace." It is like a gate to a park which opens into unknown beauty, the great joys of which we see only in most distant glimpses. But when the apostles prayed for grace and asked above all other things that the grace of God might abide upon their Christian children, they were asking for them the greatest boon. It should be our prayer to-day.

Do you remember how Christ introduced the wonderful Lord's prayer? I think few people remember the words which introduced it. "After this manner pray ye." What manner? Shall we declaim, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name"? Do you think that was Christ's manner? Do you think He chanted it in monotone? Do

you think that was His manner? What was the manner of the Son of God when He prayed that wonderful prayer? We need much grace to utter that prayer, inasmuch as it is so frequently repeated. We need more grace with every repetition, that we may not pray it unworthily. Think of Jesus Himself standing and saying, "Our Father." Why, the very thought is sublime beyond any form of expression! Jesus saying, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." I cannot imagine it. It is not enough to say the mere words. Words have no intrinsic grace at all. It is an added something that is grace. It is a reverence, a beauty, a loveliness, a spirit that is added, halo-like, which gilds it, adorns it. That is grace. The apostles prayed for that grace. Oh, that we could pray that prayer as Jesus prayed.

Then when He sat at the table on that last night and gave His instructions to the disciples, the Book states that "after this manner He took the cup." After this grace He took the cup. I have sometimes felt miserably sinful and unworthy as I have stood at the table of the Lord and tried to get a picture of Jesus standing there as He took that cup

and passed it down to His disciples. He did not take up a great tray covered with a row of cups and say, "Now take this tray down the table and each one of you take one and drink by your lonesome self." He did not say that. That was not His "manner." His manner was that of loving kindness divine. His grace of movement, tone, situation, everything, was that of the divine Son of God. "After this manner also He took the cup and gave to His disciples," and He said, "Drink ye all of it." The cup He had blessed passed down that table while He sat there, His presence giving it divine benediction of grace. If you picture that in your imagination, your soul is lost in worship. Oh, to have seen it! I would like to have heard Him sing. But I would have loved more to have recognized His grace in the intangible spirit of love.

Oh, there is a right way of doing a right thing, and there is a wicked way of doing a right thing. A man once owed me seventeen dollars. I needed that money very much, so I asked him for it twice. He was offended, as nearly every debtor is in such case, because there is no surer way to make an enemy of a man than to lend him money without security. He was offended and he

came to my door, and when I opened it to him he threw those silver dollars into the front hall and said, "There, take your debt," and went mumbling down the path. He owed me that money and he ought to have paid it. It was his duty to pay. But it was wrong to pay it in that way. There is a wrong way of doing a right thing.

If the rich men of the country had more grace, which comes from the love of one's fellow man, capitalists and working men would be the most intimate friends, and prosperity instead of hard times would face the American people. There is an ungraceful way of doing the right thing.

A physician enters a room and prescribes for a patient. He may prescribe the very best medicines, and yet may drive that patient into a fever that will be certain to destroy his life, simply by his manner. He may come in roughly and gruffly, or he may scold at the nurse and at the people in the house, and he may be a curse to the whole house.

How true it is of preaching. Oh, that we knew how to preach! There does not seem to be a living man on earth now who knows how to preach the Gospel. We all lack grace, lack the ability to so present it as to

make it acceptable to the mind and reason of the people who listen. Oh, for the grace of the old apostles! Oh, for the grace of the church fathers, who, while they did not say those things that were especially wise, did say them with a grace and love which turned the hearts of thousands unto God. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is necessary even when we are doing right. How true it is of worship.

One other illustration. Esther was taken in before the king, and the Scriptures say "She found grace in his sight." My attention was called this week to the influence of a young woman who is a stenographer in an office in this city. Three persons have been converted to Jesus Christ in the last few weeks by that stenographer. When I asked one of them what it was that gave her such an influence, he said: "It is something about her Christian manner. She is such a genuine Christian woman. No one would think of approaching her with a wicked suggestion or a vile oath—not one—because her womanhood is so true, her character so clear, and her manner so modest that when she speaks men listen respectfully." Oh, for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to have such an influence as that! I look upon the great

classes of young women who are going into offices as stenographers, with a trembling in my heart. It is the most dangerous occupation. No occupation on earth is more severe. They ought to be warned, strengthened, cautioned and founded in Christian character, deep and sure, before they venture out alone among men, to do that kind of work. I believe that women ought to do it. I believe the way ought to be open to them and to higher occupations and to more remunerative work. I approve of the young woman studying for business, provided she has the "grace" that characterized this one who has drawn all those around her to righteousness and goodness. Provided she has always the transfigured character, unmovable in righteousness and grace. Esther found grace in the king's sight. Ask any man what is his highest ideal of womanhood and he will tell you it is that "womanly grace" which cannot be put into words and cannot be painted upon canvas. It is something extraneous and yet something intrinsic; something added. A mere human animal and a graceful woman are so wide apart that manhood recognizes the difference at a glance.

When I was at the university in Munich, years ago, Professor Virchow came there to

lecture. The little nervous man was at that time in the whirl of politics, advocating reforms in Germany, and since that day he has been the greatest scientist that this world ever knew. He died a few days ago at eighty-two years of age. He was greater than Huxley; he knew far more than Darwin. There is not a hospital now in a civilized land that could not find "Virchow" written on almost anything that it has and does. He was the originator of the "cell theory." He began the systematic bacteria investigations, especially of typhoid fever, smallpox and cholera. It was Virchow who laid the foundations for the mightiest advance that science has made in bacteriology. I recall how he looked when he came into the lecture room at the university. What a sense of grace there was about the man. While he joked in the midst of his lectures, the students never thought of ridiculing him. He was very eccentric in his manner. He was not an orator. He was nervous. He was absurd in many ways. But there was an inexpressible "grace" about the man. He was so attractive. You listened in spite of yourself, and you felt that you loved him before you had heard him a half hour.

That great scientist, through all the scien-

tific discussions concerning the Bible, and often against Christianity, stood firm. When Huxley and Darwin and others were condemning Christianity, Professor Virchow, the greatest scientist that ever lived, stood straight and true for the fundamental principles of Christianity. He regretted "that men would spend their time assailing an institution so valuable to the world as the Christian Church." It was the grace of the man. Although he was in politics for years, and although he was also an archæologist and went into a great variety of occupations, yet in each he was the king—jack of all trades, and yet a success in them all. Professor Virchow's influence on the world, the grace of the man, his goodness of heart, the outspringing of his sympathy, his desire to do right and be right, had an influence upon his students which made them nobler, more ambitious for righteousness, more persistent seekers after truth for the love of the truth. Professor Virchow's life had grace in it. Oh, if I were called upon to speak upon the life of Virchow I should speak entirely upon the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that was about his movements, his words, his home life, his public life, his entire character. Benefactor of the world beyond any compare, perhaps,

since the day of Christ, was Professor Virchow. You cannot use over-extravagant language about him; and yet the chief merit of his life was that sweet, lovable grace of character that impressed all beholders. May the grace of his example influence us all.

VI

WORK SHOULD BE PLAY

"Then they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for His name." (*Acts v. 41.*)

BEAUTY is its own payment. "Virtue is its own reward." We have heard that ever since we were school children, but few of us have ever reached a full understanding of what the great philosopher meant. I think that the parents of Noah had something of this sublime idea, when they named their child. As is explained in the Scriptures, they named him Noah because he was to bring them "comfort in their work"; he was to make their work enjoyable. Joseph had the same idea when he named his son Manasseh, because he said, "He has made me forget my toil." The apostle said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."

To present this subject in as condensed a form as I can, I will say that at last Christianity, working out into society and giving

its slow but continual impulse to the modern educational affairs of the world, has brought into being the kindergarten—that is, the Christian, the Godlike idea concerning the education of the world. Education, labour, and any sort of toil ought to be play. There should be no such thing as hard work in the world, as we understand the modern sense of that term. All labour should be play, and all play, in the opposite sense, should be labour. Now, under the kindergarten system, the very fundamental idea is the Christian idea expressed in this verse concerning Peter and John. They were rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name's sake. Even suffering was a joy. Labour and toil were pleasure and play.

When the kindergarten system was adopted it was adopted with the idea that we ought to make this world happier ; and that people engaging in toil ought to do it in a different spirit. Consequently childhood is taken through a series of plays all the way upward into greater and greater wisdom, and its work is made sport. That is the new education. It must be carried into higher walks of educational life, and the college student must learn that in order to achieve the ideal type of humanity, he needs to make his study as

much his play as is his baseball or football or rowing. There is too strong a division made between what is play and what is work in college and university life.

Men spend hours over some little wooden puzzle. There are much greater puzzles in Euclid and in solid geometry than in any such combination of wooden sticks. And yet a man will spend his days uselessly over that which gives him but little discipline of mind; and the same man, thinking Euclid is work, refuses to touch it.

The time is coming when Christ will have built up that ideal man whose life will be all joy and play. Not a thing will he be called upon to do which is a duty that he will not do as readily and enthusiastically as if he were engaged in a game. In the ideal Christian of the future that Christ came to build upon the earth, man will all the while be at work in the sense of helping and inspiring, yet all the time at play.

What is the pay for the Grecian races? One spends four years in discipline of body; he spends many days previous to the race on plain food and in exercises that seem to be so severe, for the purpose of running from Marathon to Athens. When he has won the race, what does he receive but a crown of

laurels? He has worked years and months for the purpose of getting that crown. Of what use is it to him? If it were to bring him real ability of mind, or high position in the political world, we might as human beings think it worth all his labour; but he gets only the applause of the people who see him enter the stadium. Yet that is the most enjoyable thing in his life. He has worked harder for it than anything he has ever undertaken, and made sacrifices for it such as he has never made in the daily walks of life—all for the little crown and the little applause; yet he has enjoyed all the toil. Now, if this very thought could be taken, as the Apostle Paul tried to inculcate it, into the daily living of Christian experience, all our duty made but a delightful race like his who is seeking to win the goal, a race wherein we consider every sacrifice a joy and the running the supremest of delight, then should we have the ideal man Christ had in view when He came to put His character into men.

There are two kinds of fishermen. One kind goes reluctantly aboard the vessel, lies about dreading fishing, sails out on the banks, and, weary when he begins, pulls in codfish by the thousand, stores them in the hold, comes home weary, complaining; the fish

are sold, and life is dull, monotonous and hard. I know of no life that seems to be more severe than the life of those fishermen off the banks who are exposed to storms, trials and sacrifices. Yet you see another man from the city of Boston who does not need any fish, who has no place for them when he catches them; he does not care to eat any of them; and yet he fits up his yacht at the expense of thousands of dollars and goes out on the same banks, and fishes patiently there and enjoys it to such an extent that he grows fleshy, cheerful and Christian; he sails home, throws away his fish as he comes up the harbour, goes to his family and says, "I have had a most delightful time. I have been out catching codfish." Why should not the man who goes out from Gloucester go out with the same spirit and enjoy the pulling in of those same fish? It is because of the sinful inconsistencies in human life that a man enjoys better that which brings him nothing than that which brings him much. It is this inconsistency that Christ was trying to exterminate from the minds of men; and we find Peter and John had reached this excellent standard when they said they rejoiced, counted it all joy that they were "worthy to suffer shame for His name's sake."

What a difference there is in people who wear diamonds! I have often been interested in looking upon the diamonds flashing in a company. Nine out of ten wear them to arouse in the minds of other people envy or respect for their riches; they were worn to flash out on an astonished world their owners' egotism. But once in a while I see on the hand of modesty a diamond flash that I know is not there because of a desire to arouse envy in others. I feel by instinct that it was given her by some one who sincerely loved her, and that she herself enjoys its beauty.

Mr. Beecher would never wear a diamond, but he always had gems in his pocket. In the last twenty-five years of his life he could put his hand into his pocket and take out, not a handful, but twenty-five or thirty diamonds, some of them very large and valuable; and when he had been intent upon study, or desired some interesting diversion, he would sit by himself and look over those gems, one by one, and enjoy the wonderful beauty of the last and highest of God's mineral creations. There is this difference between the wearers of diamonds. One wears them not for the joy she is to get out of them, but for the unhappiness she proposes to give other

people; and the other wears them because of the pure joy they give to her.

We are told in the Bible by the apostle that he would that the young women should marry and should bear children; how often in our modern life young women and young men refuse to marry or to bear children because of the great care the children would be to them. A little one cries by night and must be continually attended. It must be the subject of continual watch-care, and of great expense; and consequently young men or women draw back from the awful responsibility of fatherhood or motherhood, forgetting that motherhood is its own reward, that motherhood does not consist in what is to be gained when the children are old and shall leave home, but in the continual supply of joy which comes from every action of care. How beautiful is motherhood! How magnificent it is!

In these days, when children are so few, the world is losing its richest and best experiences; it is getting farther and farther from God because of the fact that the actual care of children, while it is going on every day and night, is not, as it should be, the greatest joy that comes to any human life. The bringing up of children, we say, is difficult

and hard. Ah, let them be taken by death, and then look back and see what joy you might have had, if you did not really have it, with every day of their care. It is said that in many of the Grecian races they seek a handicap. They want the honour and name of being handicapped ; that is, being obliged to carry some heavier weight, or to give their antagonist a few rods or miles the start. They say that because they want to undertake a difficult thing, to overcome an antagonist who had an advantage over them. If this thought were to get into character until we enjoyed it in everything, until we sought the hardest places and the most difficult undertakings because they are hard and difficult, and enjoyed them the more for that —oh, life would be heavenly ! Oh, to be able to undertake anything in reason and enjoy it ; and the harder the task the greater the delight !

The reason why progressive euchre is evil, so far as I understand it, is that it becomes evil when it becomes gambling. If a person plays such a game for a prize he becomes a gambler. If he plays an innocent game for the purpose of enjoying the social game itself, there is an entirely different idea in that. A person who lives in the enjoyment

of what it is a duty to do, if it be an honest or honourable thing, is living in the lines of the intellectual and physical progressiveness, that Christ has tried to impress upon our lives. Covetousness consists in painfully laying up money for the future. That a man should lay up sufficient to care for his family is a duty impressed upon us by the Bible. But he should enjoy the process of accumulation more than the idea of having it laid up. If you are in business for what you can make out of it in the future you are unchristian, ungodly in the sense expressed by Peter and John. You should be in business with a present joy of doing that business, for the happiness there comes out of the very doing of it.

It is said of Professor Agassiz, that he was asked to lecture, and was offered the sum of one thousand dollars a night. But Professor Agassiz replied that he "had no time for making money." He was too busy. His whole mind was engrossed in the study of the development of evolution of life upon the earth, of God in nature; and he had no time to give lectures for the sole purpose of making money. He did have time to lecture, but not with the idea of doing it for money, and the more he was offered in the way of

money to lecture the less likely he was to go; because he was so single-minded, so devoted to his God-given calling, that he could not let the thought of the accumulation of money interfere with the fascinating study.

My attention was called to a man the other day who never knows when he is awake. Many people walk in their sleep, but they know when they are awake; but this man is so afflicted with that disease—if it is a disease—that he asks friends to shake him in order that he may be sure that he is fit to attend to any business. He does not know when he is in a dream, because his dreams are as real as his actual life, and sometimes in a half hour, like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, he will transfer his mind from the active, waking, business man into the dreamy philosopher. He has a friend to go with him all the time. If he is going to transact any business this friend shakes him, or in some way startles him or attracts his attention, that he may be sure that when he buys a piece of meat in the market he is sane. That man does not know when he is awake, or when he is asleep, and there are Christians like that who are always living in that uncertain, dreamy condition. They are awake at times, but they are not certain that they are.

When you read this story of Peter and John, who were arrested, and of how they healed the sick man, if you are in the dreamy condition you think, "Well, I do not know whether that is true or not." Many people read the Bible and think that it is a condition of life separate from anything that is practical, anything that is historical. You hear about these miracles, you read of these saintly men, and they give a kind of dreamy impression; you do not feel certain it is true; you do not know whether you are awake or not, and you need to be shaken enough to get out of that condition into a state of faith where you know that you are awake and consequently believe and enjoy. Now the man mentioned is in a continual worry lest he is asleep—and many Christians are also in a worry lest they are asleep. Awake, thou that sleepest!

No matter what came to Peter or John, it was all the same to them. If they had shame they were happy; if they suffered affliction they enjoyed it, and consequently their enemies had no power over them. Satan could not defeat them, because if Satan tried to injure them it only made them the more happy. If anything will defeat the minions of Satan, it is for a Christian to be so thoroughly wake-

ful and trustful that when he does suffer he enjoys even that, and wherever his duty calls him he is happy.

The apostles associated themselves with Jesus Christ and with each other, and I believe in association consists largely our own ability to enjoy. They associated with the good and the joyful. This is the duty of Christians. Seek strength and wisdom among Christian associations, among those who have this waking sanity, among those confident of their faith, among those who enjoy sacrificing for Christ, among those who go by the Word and all it directs and find more joy in doing their duty than in any sport. To get into association with these people and secure their friendship is the most important movement on the part of him who would make his life more like Christ.

I do not suppose the angels toil, yet I think they work all the time. It is said that God rested on the seventh day, but that does not mean that He stopped creating on the seventh day. It does not mean that He was tired. He never gets tired. But it means that on the seventh day He inspected what He had done and saw that it was good. He was not weary. I do not believe the angels are ever weary.

An illustration of my thought came to me when I had been thinking how much more I would like to study the Bible and meditate upon it. The other day I secured a spare hour, such as I have not had for years, in which to meditate upon the Scriptures, and I selected that verse concerning Peter's release from prison and meditated upon it, and I caught a gleam of what there is of joy in store for the students of this Bible. I secured a hint of what those people enjoy who have the time and liberty to search into the depths of these wonderful riches, to take up their treasures and examine them with deliberation. Oh, that we could study the Bible and find it no hardship, make the duty a pleasure as we get into the spirit of the Scripture. What I saw in my meditation might not be historically correct; but it illustrates a great and divine truth. I shall not forget it during my life. It seemed to me that I could look into a little humble cottage under the trees, near the garden and the waterfall on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; I could hear the little cry of a tiny child; I could see the Galilean mother as she nursed that child, as she crooned to it in the cradle, as she carried it forth into the garden. It seemed as if I could watch its growth from day to

day, and see the father, the strong fisherman, hurry up from the nets on the shore to that little cottage, to take his little child and sing to her himself, and talk to her in the Galilean language. It all came to me as if I were seeing an actual picture of life. I could imagine the father and mother with that little girl, leading her down to the synagogue at Capernaum. I could see her as they took her back to their home. I could see them as they tried to teach her. I could see them as their hearts began to develop more and more with the tenderest hopes of glory. I could see the loving heartfulness that I have not words to tell. I could see them year by year caring for her. I could hear her gleeful laugh. I could see her cheerful smile. I could see the flash of her bright eye. I could see her running in again and again into the old Galilean cottage. I could see friends who looked over the garden fence and asked, "Who is it that is laughing so joyfully?"

I have not the time or the purpose now to describe the growth of such a little girl. Years, years, developing, developing, developing. I could see a time when in the night they sent for the rabbi; they whispered about the cottage and people spoke low

as they passed the gate. They said, "Little Hannah is dying." I could feel the chill and the gloom of that home when the parents of that only child leaned over to hear the last rattle and to close the eyes in death. Gone! She has become an angel again. From the heights of heaven, in the glory of an everlasting joy, she looked down upon a disconsolate home, deserted. I could see why Peter could go from his delightful Galilean home without regret. I could understand why his wife would go with him through the desert down to Babylon. I could see why Galilee lost its fascination. I could understand why even the sound of the waterfall there made suggestions of sorrow, and the sight of the old plum tree and the apricot tree brought suggestions of childhood and maidenhood, which bring only grief. Yes, Peter went forth, his wife with him, to wander up and down the earth, and perhaps never go back to that old home again. But the little one has become an angel, and as I meditated upon it, it seemed to grow into my life and experience as history until I saw him in that prison in Jerusalem contented—there, in darkness, chill, alone, to be brought forth to the amphitheatre and cast to the lions for the sport of the people. Yes, I could see that

father lying there. A heavenly angel saw him and asked to be sent to him in his distress. I could see a flash of light in the prison. I could see the angel there. Peter's daughter, sent of God, an angel now, came down to her father's relief. She unlocked the chain, and she smilingly smote him from sleep as she did when she was a little girl. She aroused him and gave him his clothes. While he walked as in a dream, she led him forth. The gates opened to her. When she reached the first square she disappeared, for she was a messenger of God.

Thus the loved ones who have gone before us come back to us in days of distress and grief, and if Peter had not suffered in that prison his little child as an angel would not have visited him. How wise the philosophy of Peter in saying that he would rejoice in any suffering, and how wise it was is shown by what may have been the fact, that the loved daughter as a messenger of God may have returned to him that night, and led him forth to his release. When he finished this lonely life and went into the other world he found his daughter waiting joyfully for him there, and saying, "There is no toil here, no more hardship here ; because in this heavenly land all duty is joy and all work is play."

VII

AMUSEMENTS

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, pass away." (*Prov. iv. 14–15.*)

IT seems to me a great measure of presumption to speak upon the question of amusements in its relationship to the Christian Church, because I cannot feel that you care very much for my personal opinion.

The Bible does not say anything about cards. It does not mention gambling, and its references to dancing are somewhat indistinct. The probability is that to discuss this question is to argue a question of minor importance from the Scriptural view of the case. But let me avoid speech-making or "sermonizing," and give the real, earnest advice of a sincere friend. The Scriptures clearly teach, and science has confirmed it wonderfully, that God is rebuilding on the earth an ideal humanity, a perfect manhood and a perfect womanhood. All the teachings of the Scriptures and all the influences of Christ's Spirit and all the agencies of God's

laws in nature seem to be combining for the purpose of producing ultimately out of all the chaos of the present humanity one complete type of godly human beings. In the construction of such an ideal nature we may reasonably conclude that man will need perfect health. He will be absolutely cheerful; he will be pure and clean; he will be very wise; he will be deeply religious; he will be earnestly loved; he will be greatly admired, and he will also be greatly feared.

You cannot conceive of a perfect man unless he is healthy in body, of complete contour, in accordance with the divine plan, "made in the image of God." You cannot think of him as not being cheerful. There is no complete human nature without good cheer. Good cheer is the type of the highest present Christian civilization. You find a gloomy, doubtful, hateful, disagreeable nature, the scowls of which are apparent upon the face, and you say that that is not a complete human nature. If you find a person unclean, you cannot imagine that that is in accordance with the divine plan. If you find a person behaving very foolishly, then you feel that insomuch as he is weak and erroneous he falls short of the ultimate divine plan. And if he is irreligious, if he has not the emotions

of a religious nature, if he has not an appreciation of the sublime and the great in the handiwork of God, he is insomuch a failure in the completion of God's great ideal.

Then, in the development of this life, which is evidently intended for this world, as well as in the redemption of souls for the world to come, we find many evils and hindrances. Why they are here I need not now discuss, if I knew enough to discuss it, which I do not. But among the hindrances which prevent our development and growth are: Disease—disease, the result of sin; intemperance in the use of drink, bringing intoxication and all its attendant woes; food eaten in immeasurable quantities, food taken of the wrong character, food which brings dyspepsia and disarrangement in the human system. Lack of sleep; whosoever does not sleep his eight or nine hours is insomuch stunting himself and preventing the development of his or her complete nature. Fashion. One of the greatest agencies for the deterioration of the race, for the bringing in of invalids upon the earth, is the powerful laws of foolish fashion. Licentiousness. A great evil coming in to deter and destroy and to deform humanity. Selfishness. A trait of character, hindering the development of the body, the

growth of the mind, and destroying the purity of the soul. Possessing this the triune man is incomplete. One who entertains hatred has it expressed in his manner, upon his face, in the light of his eye, in the expression of his mouth. One who entertains envy exhibits it in almost every gesture. Greed, untruthfulness and other passions of humanity leave their mark on the human countenance and exhibit themselves in other relationships of life. If a man is really filled full of this life to the extermination of hope of the other, having no religious aspirations or hope, never looking up into the face of God, never desiring heavenly glories, he has a stunted and deformed character, and one which cannot be completed until some great change takes place in soul, or in mind.

Now this is stated only for the sake of pointing to the deep-seated reason why the consideration of the question of amusements is important. To make perfection requires healthy exercise of mind, body, brain and soul, and economy of power. Strength and time are necessary for the ideal growth which God is striving to build up in His kingdom on the earth, and they lead to the development of those noble traits of character required in the ideal man. A man filled with hope is

healthier and happier and more successful, brings more of heaven down to earth than one without hope and in gloom. To be happy in this life is the highest thing attainable; to be happy in the world to come is all we are praying for, and Christ's great atonement was given that we might be happy there.

Avoiding, then, a further restatement of the old questions of doctrine, I attempt a reasonable discussion of this great question: Where are young people to draw the line between exercise that is healthful and exercise that is injurious; between a conscientiousness that is pure and divine and one that is overmorbid and insane; between study that secures wisdom and study that breaks the mind; between economy that is careful, kind and good, and economy that is stingy; between industry that is the use of reasonable powers and work which is the over-use of the powers, leading to the destruction, or murder, of one's self. The only safe course is to adopt the intermediate condition between two wicked extremes, and when the great writer says, in the wonderful words of Solomon, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, go not in the way of evil men," he is simply laying down the general principle which the

Bible continually lays down for the control of our actions in life, viz.: keep out of bad company.

The Scriptures do not expressly teach that you shall not play cards; they do not teach that you shall not go to the theatre. The teachings of the Scriptures are intended to make a good heart, a clear character, a clean conscience, trusting that the man with a good heart, a clear conscience and a good character will be able always to decide for himself what things are wrong and what things are right. Hence the insistence on teaching Christ all the time and the Bible all the time, and enforcing the great fundamental principles of Christianity and godliness, in order that people may never be left in doubt as to whether or not a thing is right or wrong. Young people are much confused concerning this question. They continually come to the pastor of the church and say, "Now, do you think it would be wicked for me to dance?" The only thing that one can say under such circumstances is to speak honestly, for dishonesty of any kind is never justifiable in God's house or anywhere else. I cannot find any place in the Bible where God condemns dancing. I read in the story of the Prodigal Son to-night that the father welcomed home

the prodigal son with music and dancing; shall I leave out that portion of the Scriptures and say that dancing is wrong?

Little children came in yesterday, seized hold of hands and danced "Ring-around-a-rosy." Those children were happy. This world is full of sorrow, and oh, there is so much woe! I have attended so many funerals that I look back through years of funerals, and have one or more every day in the week to come—funerals, sadness, sorrow everywhere. For the Lord's sake, let us not take out of this world one ray of light, one hour of pure happiness, one season of innocent sport! If we love the dear Lord as He loves us, we shall so love each other that we would consider it wickedness supreme to interfere with innocent joys of childhood. A child goes up and down on the sidewalk in front of my house with a hoop. She is jumping the hoop. Of course, that is dancing. There have been times when men believed that was irreligion. But when we come to a faithful study of the Scriptures in order to determine this question we must declare that the Bible does not teach that all dancing is wrong.

But it does teach, by inference clear and decided, that some kinds of dancing are

wrong. That brings me to the text and its application: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, go not in the way of evil men, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, pass away." That is the teaching of the Scriptures. If your dancing brings you into association with evil men, if any dancing of yours produces an evil effect upon your inclinations, passions and character, unbecoming to your growth into the symmetry of God, then it is wrong —not wrong because it is dancing, but wrong because of its association with evil and with evil men; not wrong because the Bible condemns leaping in time to music, but wrong because of its being so near to evil that you are encouraging the wrong or partaking somewhat in its condemnation. Is this not consistent? In all these things the line is to be drawn by the individual conscience. We insist on the quickening of the conscience and then leaving to the individual the question as to the kind of dancing and the place of dancing. That is the principle of the Baptist Church, but it does not make any difference to you or me whether it is Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian or Catholic—we want to be right, and to be right we must go to the Scriptures.

How shall we decide whether playing

cards is wrong or not? I was brought up to believe that it was wrong. Many people come to me and say, "Do you believe in progressive euchre parties? You should condemn them from the pulpit." But how can I explain something I do not know anything about? I do not know one card from another, so I am in the dark. I often see people playing cards, and it looks to me like a great waste of time, and if that is so it is wickedness. But why should playing cards be more evil than playing checkers, or croquet or any outdoor game or sport? You will say, "It encourages gambling." Then, if it does it is wrong. Where is the line to be drawn? If cards encourage gambling, as I was always taught in my youth they did, then burn them all, for the evil they do is more than the good they do. But do they encourage gambling? For my part, judging by excellent Christian friends, I should say that innocent games of cards are harmless, as a matter of logic as well as a matter of fact. I could not find it in my heart, as a servant of God, soon to give an account before the great white throne, to declare that the Bible says that simple card-playing is wrong. The subject of cards is not mentioned in the Bible at all. Why

should they be selected out of all the devices with which men gamble? A gambler will gamble with almost anything. Extreme risks and seeking something for nothing are wicked. We gamble more or less every day. We buy some goods this week with the idea of selling them again. We know not what the price will be after we have bought them, but we hold them on speculation. Yet we say that that is "business." Where shall we draw the line between legitimate and illegitimate speculation?

I once undertook to tell some members of the church that I thought they were doing very wrong in wearing such low-necked dresses. I think so still. The ladies were very angry at the time, but they since seem to be good friends. I told them that immodesty was un-Christian; that it was wickedness. But they said to me, "How shall we decide just how low to cut a dress so that we can be certain whether or not it is modest or immodest?" They threw me into difficulty, for I could not cut a dress, and if I could, I could not decide a question like that. Just how high in the neck it shall be, or how low, must be decided by the modest conscience of every individual woman. We all know that the extreme would be immodest, unchaste,

unwomanly, impure and un-Christian. But just where to draw the line between the good and the evil is the question to be determined by a cultivated, keen conscience. Where the line of good leaves off and the line of evil begins can only be decided by a very acute and sensitive moral consciousness; and no one but the person concerned can decide the question for his own individual guidance.

We believe that it is wrong to gamble, because the whole tenor of the Scripture is against that. But even that question is difficult to determine at times. The policeman realizes that. He sees two little boys playing marbles in the street, and one boy wins the marbles away from the other boy—gambling with marbles. Now, shall the policeman arrest the boys playing marbles, or shall he arrest the man who invests in barrels of potatoes, with the hope of selling them next week at an advance, yet not knowing what the market price will be, or whether or not the potatoes are sound? Where is the line to be drawn? Yet in either case there has been gambling—in a sense. Away from extremes each must decide for himself, and to decide correctly we must have a standard, and that standard is found in the teachings of Scripture.

The same is true with reference to the theatre. The theatre is not mentioned in the Bible. The Church instituted the theatre. All the actors once belonged to the Church, and they were devoted priests, or ministers, or earnest Christians, and the theatre in that day taught a great deal of good. It was a forcible way of preaching the Gospel, a wing of the Church, carried on for the education of the people in religious truths. For my own part, I am personally opposed to some theatres, because I believe the Scriptures are clearly opposed to the indecent exposure which we find in many of the theatres of the world. The Church has given up the theatre because to-day a great many of the exhibitions are wrong, and I believe the theatre on the whole does more evil than good, and I would vote for its entire prohibition. Whiskey may be good to take for a rattlesnake bite, yet does much evil when used out of place. So the theatre does more harm than good. You need but to go out on the street and look at the bill-boards to understand what the theatre is. I know it must often be immodest, and immodesty leads to licentiousness and all kinds of wickedness, to assassination, to murder. Anything that ministers to such base passions is wrong.

But I cannot say that the Church is against any innocent forms of theatrical amusement. It is against their association with evil, and it is against their use for a bad purpose. We are not against mankind. We love mankind; yet many of them are wicked. We must be against their wickedness, but not against them. We want to save the sinner, but we hate his sin. So we want to save to the world every innocent game, every innocent sport, every exhibition upon the stage that is pure and teaches good morals, uprightness and religion. We would like to save them all to the world, but we hate their sin and their association with sin. Hence: the Church of Jesus Christ everywhere, instead of coming down and deciding that this and that is wrong, where consciences may differ, must insist upon going back to the teachings of God, knowing that if the heart is pure and the soul is converted, there will seldom be any difficulty with reference to these subjects. Evil and good cannot remain together in the same heart. The good will drive out the evil, and if a young man finds his association in dancing is encouraging him to evil and bringing him into bad company, and if he loves Jesus Christ, the inconsistency at once causes him to separate

himself from those companions. The same is true of the theatre, of cards or any other game. The great necessity is to have Christ in the heart, and then to go nowhere where Christ would not go, and approve of nothing that Christ would condemn; be at all times against evil, and openly, decidedly in favour of anything that is good, striving to study the Scriptures until we find out what is good and what is wrong, endeavouring to stand in holy relationship to God and to mankind.

VIII

THROUGH THE COMMANDMENTS TO CHRIST

"I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage." (*Ex. xxii. 2.*)

THERE is nothing more inspiring towards good thoughts and right living than to have sweet memories of the goodness of our parents, of the Christianity in our homes and the protection of God through a varied and a dangerous life. I do not suppose that the Lord has any better way of instructing us than by recalling to our minds the things that have been done for us in the days when we were unconscious of danger, or when we were utterly unable to care for ourselves. So at the opening of the ten commandments He introduces them by this condescending, fatherly, tender call to remembrance, and says, "I am the Lord thy God. I brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage," reminding them so lovingly, divinely and sweetly that He cared for them long ago, that

He protected them through the long journey, and often when they had forgotten Him. Thus He introduces the world-wide, respected ten commandments.

"I brought thee out of the house of bondage." He reminded them that He had saved their lives. Once a true friend saved a friend —saved him from a watery grave at the risk of his own life. Afterwards the saved man rebuked his saviour because of the freedom of the earnest advice which he gave. Then said the friend, in tears, "I am the same friend now that I was when I went into the waters and offered my life to save yours." Jesus Christ is continually saying that we should keep Him in memory, and that we should do this "in memory of Him," so that I call your attention to this verse to destroy, if I can, something of the effect of the old theological teachings about the awful thunder and the fierce lightning and the severity of God's character in the ten commandments. The Old Testament is as tender as the New Testament. It depends upon the spirit with which we read it, and the eyes from which we look upon it. The Old Testament is full of the love of Christ and of the love of God, and the ten commandments are not such cruel, hard-hearted, metallic utterances as has

too often been taught. God introduced them by saying, "I am the same friend now, in what I am going to say, as I was when I cared for you all through the dangers of the forty years of the wilderness." It was kindness at Sinai; it was the divine loving, and not a stroke of lightning, not the crash of thunder, not the crumbling of rocks, not the earthquake shock, not a dark cloud, not darkness, that we should see; it was the same Christ that was in Gethsemane, on the cross and in the ascension—all kindness.

It was like the kindness of that father who, out in Chicago, took his eleven-year-old boy through the great machine shop, and who commanded him not to go near the great machinery. That command was a greater indication of the father's love than the invitation to take the boy to the place. And on Mt. Sinai the Lord is saying, "This machinery of the universe has been set in motion; it has great objects. I cannot change it; its beltings must be kept on; its cog-wheels must be kept intact, and the steam must be persistently forcing on the stars and the untold worlds and I must not stop it; but I plead with you, do not go near, dangerously near, to the machinery." Just as the mother pleads with her son not to go to the saloon

or into bad company, so the Lord plead at Sinai for the people to obey these settled rules, these eternal laws, because they would be destroyed who do not obey.

He said to them, "Have no other gods before Me." He said that in kindness, not in egotism. William Lloyd Garrison used to tell with a great deal of interest about a slave that he met in the Southern states, when he went there secretly to study the situation and write about it in his magazine. The slave was a very intelligent man, and he told the slave that if he could escape and reach the other side of the Canada line he would be free, because under the flag of England there could be no slave. When he had persuaded the black man to undertake to obtain his freedom he said to him, "If you start, keep your eye on the north star. Study that star; see what stars are near it; look at the Great Ursa Major; look at the great dipper; see those under stars pointing to the north star; then look at the constellation on the right; you see those stars like a diamond together; they point to the north star. Now keep that north star in your eye. Be sure to do that! Many a slave had been taken back and whipped; many a fugitive has suffered because he did not keep that star in view;

therefore if you wish to be free, keep that one star in mind." So God says to His children, "Keep your eye right on Me, on the one central star of the universe, and keep your footsteps directed in My way, not because I am hard and rude, coarse and brutal, but because I am a loving, divine heavenly Father and wish to see you free."

In the next commandment God declared, in the same kind manner, "Do not make any caricatures of good things; do not ridicule your God; do not belittle the ideals of things that are holy and sacred; it will do you harm; it will injure your friends; it will give you a very bad reputation." A man who desired to come into my employment spoke to me concerning the work that he would undertake and the salary he wished to have. He was in a barber shop. While I was waiting he was talking to the barber and making sport of men who pretended to tell the truth. His insinuations were those of a man who tried to keep the reputation of being honest, but was probably a hypocrite. Neither you nor I would want to employ such a person as that. His character was revealed by what he ridiculed. The Lord said to His children, "Always reverence things holy and beautiful and good. Do not

make fun of sacred things, because it influences your own character; it advertises your bad character to your friends and does them harm. Was it not the most kind advice that you can think of—"Thou shalt not make any images of Me and bow down yourself to them—because the most perfect image that man could ever make would be only a caricature of the great, almighty, divine, heavenly Father. So do not make those things in imitation of Me." He did not command that they should not make any graven image at all; the command was that they should not make any graven image of God to bow down before it. He did not command that they should not make carvings and paintings of created things worthy of honour and respect, but they must not try to imitate God and to pretend to bring His divinity down to the measure of their handiwork. That would be ridiculing God.

Then notice the great-hearted kindness of God in the third commandment, "Thou shalt not take My name in vain; do not use a great investment for little profit; do not use a great good for a little gain; do not put My name in association with that which will degrade it and bring yourself to harm." The Lord's name was like His seal. When a

king entrusts his seal to his prime minister, he says, "Do not put that seal on anything but important documents." If a man were to take that into a saloon and put that king's seal upon a bill for his drinks, he would be disgracing his king and dishonouring everything in the name of friendship. The third commandment has that spiritual heart in it—do not put my name where it will be a disgrace to me, and consequently a disgrace to all who love me. Just so a father, dying, says to his son, "Do not put my name where it will ever be a disgrace to you; carry my name with honour." It is excellent advice, and we should plead with others to observe it and should observe it ourselves. Do not use the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

When at Germantown a mock company of revellers ventured upon the disgraceful method of ridiculing the things of God by setting up the Lord's Supper, and one of their number acting the part of Christ, it was a profane thing. It was bringing the name of Christ into a drunken revel. It is true that four weeks later the man who acted the part of Christ was taken to an asylum and has never seen the light of reason since, and the man who organized the affair was found dead in the street, which looks like a phys-

ical judgment upon them. Whether it was a judgment or not it illustrates the moral danger of putting sacred things where God's name will be brought into disgrace.

In the fourth commandment He said, "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." Remember it, why? Why, in order "that your days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee; I love thee and wish thee peace and desire that thou shalt rest one day in seven."

A mother heard some boys at the front door one Sunday morning asking her boy to go with them on a boat down the Delaware River. The mother asked them not to invite her son to accompany them, and plead with him, saying, "If you do not want to go to church, take the day off and rest, but do not disgrace your God and His Sabbath by such sport." I was asked to attend his funeral the following Thursday, the boy having been drowned in the river. While such physical judgment may not follow all who thus desecrate His holy name, it illustrates the fact that something dreadful does follow somewhere every person who breaks that commandment. Every man should rest one day in seven. The Lord wanted us to secure that needed rest, and for that reason He

commanded it, in loving regard for His children.

I remember well how the Lord through the fifth commandment touched the heart of a boy in this congregation one evening. Something that was said reminded the boy in the balcony of his old home. He thought of the fifth commandment—"Honour thy father and thy mother." The boy began to wish that he had been more kind to his father and mother. He had forgotten the kindness of his father and mother and the patience of his sisters, and his life was filled with regrets. The Almighty God, in His tenderness, like a mother, bending over His children, said to them, "Do not fill your souls with awful regrets, having in after years to think that you did not honour your father and your mother. Not to honour father and mother is to have no home; and to have no home is to have no heaven on this earth." "Obey thy parents" is the order to children while they are children. As soon as they cease to be children it changes to "Honour thy father and thy mother," so live as to be an honour to them, to make them happy, and to make them feel that you will meet them in heaven when they shall pass hence. How kind all this advice is!

In the sixth commandment He said, "Do not commit murder." The word "kill" is translated by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and He repeats the commandment and says, "Thou shalt do no murder." In reading this week a record of twenty-one murders committed by one man, I thought, Where were the teachers of his youth? What kind of a home did he have? He did not know where his sisters were or where his brothers were. That showed me what lack of a home was back of all the murder and assassination. Perhaps there was no father worthy of honour, perhaps no mother's care, perhaps nothing worthy of being called a home. But what awful pangs of conscience must come to such a man as he deliberately faces the gallows, feeling that he deserves it. Oh, if some one had only plead with him when he was young to obey his parents, and to build up his home so that he would have a sweet remembrance of it in the days to come! Think of the murderers throughout the land; see them in the penitentiaries, in their narrow, dark cells; think of the sorrow and pain of it all. God says, "Do not murder; do not destroy human life; it is a sacred thing; I plead with you; I only let the lightning flash and the thunder and earth-

quake shock in order that you may not forget the kind advice of your heavenly Father. Do no murder." Oh, if some one had warned the great murderers who are now confined in their prisons or are facing the gallows to-day, how different their lives might have been. The teachings of the ten commandments are not the teachings of a great iron law; it is one of exhortation, that we who love God should imitate Him in urging people to keep the sixth commandment. He that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ is but a follower and a keeper of the ten commandments.

In the seventh commandment God said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Jesus Christ defines that by saying, Thou shalt not have a state of mind, thou shalt not have a condition of soul that is lustful. Thou shalt love purely, thou shalt love with a holy reverence for manhood and womanhood, for marriage, family and home. Why? "Because I love thee." There is no earthly joy superior to the supreme love of home, because there is nothing more sacred in the sight of God on this earth than a true husbandhood and pure wifehood. In these later days it has been considered unfashionable for marriages to be celebrated in the

churches. That arose because of Protestant opposition to the Romish church, because of the bitterness of sectarian differences, and we have swung away from the great sanctities of the church and have carried our weddings into the mayor's office, into a balloon, upon a house-top, into our private houses, and have put every sort of contumely upon them, regarding marriage as a matter of the merest business usage. And consequently our law courts are filled with applications for divorce, homes are unhappy, children are made thieves and murderers, and the land is overspread with evil, because we do not keep the seventh commandment. "Thou canst love in the divinest sense but one woman; thou canst love in the holiest manner but one man"; and until that law is recognized man is like the child who runs into the terrible machinery in disobedience to his father's command. "Thou shalt not" is simply the most urgent pleading of the Almighty God, that children may love their parents and parents love their children, and that brothers and sisters may be such in reality. Oh, friends, the heart grows chilly and the soul is filled with sorrow as it thinks of the orphans—the thousands of orphans—I hardly dare shock you

with the number—that there are in our city, and the greater number in New York, and the vastly greater number in London—of orphans whose parents are not dead, of orphans who never will know who their parents were, of orphans who have been brought into the world against the law of God and man, who will go all through life alone, motherless, fatherless, sisterless and brotherless, a disgrace to themselves and others, and yet through no fault of their own. Well may men and women plead God's commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery. How little of heaven men and women know who go into such evil in this world; not in this life or the other may they hope for the grace of God. Deepest, sincerest, everlasting repentance seems to be the only thing for them.

In the eighth commandment the Lord bends over His children in the same tender manner and says, "Thou shalt not steal." We are told to work six days and rest the seventh day. We sometimes forget the command to work six days and remember only the part referring to rest. If a man works six days out of the week he will be glad to rest the seventh day. Pity the millionaire who never knows what a real day's work is. And the command that we shall work six days is a

command that we shall not steal from God. Thou shalt not steal His time ; thou shalt not steal His one-seventh. Thou shalt not steal from thy fellow man. Man owns nothing in this world. When Abraham went out into the desert all was open to whoever should occupy it. But when Abraham built a well, at great expense of time and labour, then he put something of himself into it and then that well and the access to it were his, by the law of God and the consciences of men, and any man who should rob him of that well would be breaking one of the commandments of God.

In the ninth exhortation God said, " Do not lie ; do not tell an untruth." The Lord would say to women, " Do not tell your servant to state at the door that you are not at home when you are at home." He would say to salesmen, " Do not say that wool is silk." If He were to bend over this congregation He would say, " Do not pretend to be more sanctified than you are." If He were to speak to the pulpit He would say, " Do not pretend to be more holy than you would be if you were in any other occupation." If He were to speak to those who have the name of wearing fine clothes He would say, " Do not lie by your clothes ; do not wear a necktie

that is not paid for; do not advertise to the world that you own more than you do." To tell lies in that way is to put one's self in continual misery. Nothing but the clear, absolute truth is good for man or woman, although it is true that there are times when it is well not to tell even the truth when silence is best. Here is shown the sweetness of the Father's advice. He knew that we would be in continual trouble if we acted or spoke falsely. You often wonder why life has been a failure, and why the ambitions of life have not been realized. But somewhere some falsehood, some act of deception, has cursed your life and made your success impossible.

In the last commandment the Lord says, "Oh, My beloved, I brought you out of bondage and have watched over you and have loved you, and I would say unto you, Love thy neighbour as thyself." That is the same idea as expressed by Moses when he wrote, "Thou shalt not covet," "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thou lovest thyself." Oh, how false we have been to teach that a man is compelled by this commandment to surrender everything of himself for the good of other people. It is not the commandment of God. It is a grand thing to be a martyr

when martyrdom is called for, but not to be a suicide. The loving God is just, perfectly just, and He says, "Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you. Love yourself as you would have your neighbour love you. Grant unto him all things that you ask for yourself, and demand for yourself all things that you grant unto him." That is the great, universal law of equity. To do more than that is beautiful, and there are times when it is commanded that we should do more, but here is laid down the great common law that we should do unto our neighbour as we would ask that he should do unto us. What common sense there is in that commandment! If we love our neighbours as we love ourselves there will be universal peace, there will be no more wars, no more quarrellings, no more gossipings, no more lyings. Life will be a life of peace and love and sweetness inexpressible. The Lord was kind in giving us these commandments and we should get out of our minds the idea that they are to be regarded as harsh, hard and cruel, given by an unreasoning God. They are just as kind as the beatitudes and just as sweet as the Lord's Prayer.

IX

NOT WEARY OF WELL-DOING

"Be not weary in well-doing." (*2 Thess. iii. 13.*)

I KNOW of no time when a man becomes more conscious of sin, more fully appreciative of his own weakness, than when, as a minister of the Gospel, he is compelled to go before a waiting people and advocate an ideal far above his own living, and present a rule of truth that he does not seem capable of reaching. I suppose there are no five or six words in the whole Bible that have more of wisdom or are more comprehensive in their gospel meaning than these words, "Be not weary in well-doing."

I usually carry in my pocket my Greek New Testament, and had occasion recently to look at this third chapter of second Thessalonians. When I came to this old text, "Be not weary in well-doing," I concluded I knew all about it. I did not, of course, come to the deliberate decision that I understood all that God meant when He inspired the apostle to speak those words. But I thought it had been talked about so much that I knew

all I needed to know about those words. But, incidentally, finding the same Greek word in four other places in the chapter, I looked back to ascertain just its meaning in this verse. When I meditated upon the word translated "well-doing" I found that I had not known the Gospel. I had heard it too often to appreciate it. I felt exceedingly guilty, for the text itself upbraided me for lack of well-doing in my previous study of its meaning. This is a wonderful saying, this condensation of truth, this flashing diamond of beauty, so wonderfully filled with the meaning that only God can put into so few words.

"Be not weary in well-doing." It has two different meanings that are quite distinct and yet are twins. The first meaning is the one we hear about in our usual conversation: "Be not weary in doing good deeds." Now, God is not a bank; Christ is not a savings fund institution, a place where you can go and draw out your funds and then spend them for something else. God is not a mere furnisher to the world of blessings to be used for our own selfish advantage.

We are not to go to God in prayer and ask for money, for family, for children, for home and for prosperity, and get it from Him to

spend in some other way. God is the beginning and the end. He furnishes and He receives. God gives, God takes away. In the great circle of Christian experience, God is found all the way around ; and yet there are many people who think God exists only for the purpose of furnishing them with something with which they can be happy in this world.

The decision reached by the apostle, and which he put into these few words, is marvellously practical, and yet it seems to me, with our state of life and environment, so unreachable, that while I admire I yet stand in awe. Do not get weary in doing good acts. Do not get strength of God for a little while, and then abandon the things that you ought to do. Do not be weary of doing good deeds. This is the ordinary understanding of the text, and it is an excellent one, too. It is a true one.

It is a good thing to be honest ; never get tired of being honest. In this world you will find a great many dishonest people, who seem to prosper, and you will say that a lie is as good as the truth, and a state of falsehood is as good as living openly and honestly. But the teaching and advice of this condensed saying is, Be not weary of being

honest. Though all other men be dishonest, though all seem to succeed who appear to be dishonest, don't you get weary of being true. The commandments of God present all the good things of life; never be weary of following them.

Never get weary of being industrious. You may see a man succeed as a beggar, you may hear of men robbing the trolley company and getting away with the money, you may hear of other villains' success. But don't you get weary of honestly earning your own living.

Don't get weary of doing a thing that is right, or doing a thing that is good. You may have extended your hand in kindness and the beast of a man who received your administrations may have bitten your hand, yet don't get weary of doing good.

Don't get weary of loving. Those you love may misinterpret you, those you love may forsake you, but don't you get weary of loving.

Don't get weary of prayer. You are taught to pray, and sometimes you feel that you are falling into formalities, and that your prayer does not go above your head; and yet the advice of God, so excellent, so sound in sense, says, "Don't get weary; make

your prayer afresh." Arouse some new enthusiasm, pray for some new thought, arise again to your first love, and pray as you did the first time. Renew again your first prayer.

Don't get weary of going to church. There is a great duty, a great principle, involved in it. It is not a question whether you go or not; it is a question of whether you are weary of going or not. You may say the sermons are uninteresting, the hymns are the same, that you do not like to sing them so often. You may say, "I meet the same people and I go out the same way, and I do not see that I am any better this week than I was last." If those temptations come into your life, God says wisely, "Be not weary of assembling yourselves together in the church. Do not allow yourselves to get tired of it."

Do not be weary of giving. You have given, and you will be asked to give again. The man who gives once is certain to be asked to give again; and the man who gives the most is sure to be asked to give more. But do not get weary of giving, because the good of giving consists not in the name of it—not in the fact that one has given—but in the ability and disposition still to give.

Don't say, "I gave a hundred dollars the other day, and I ought not to give any more." Don't say, "I gave at a great sacrifice once, and I am weary of doing. I don't see that I have gotten any credit for it. I am not going to give again."

These temptations come into your life. But God says, "Be not weary of giving."

Oh, the contrast between Paul and Felix on that day in the great hall of justice at Cæsarea, when, simply attired and weak, the apostle appeared before Felix, the august judge of the Roman empire. One a prisoner in chains; the other the governor of a nation, appointed so by the Romans. One the judge of all the people, whose will was law; the other but the obedient servant of the soldiers who led him around with the clanking links of his Roman bonds. I would rather be Paul than Felix.

Paul could stand up and say, "I have lived in all good conscience unto this day. I am not weary of serving my God. My nation has repudiated me; my friends refuse to speak to me; my home is shut against me, none of my old acquaintances love me; they have persecuted me; they have arrested me, and they have organized to assassinate me. Here I am in chains now, and knowing not

what is to befall me; but I am not weary of the service of God. I am fighting the good fight and I will fight it to the end." I would rather be Paul in that unwearied condition of mind than to be the trembling, conscience-stricken Felix, on that throne as a judge.

Be not weary in holiness of character, in trying to be more and more like Christ. "Be not weary in well-trying, in well-undertaking, in well-praying, in well-striving, towards the pattern which Christ has set." That is the usual interpretation of this Scripture.

But when I came to the original language I found it meant something that in all my study I had never comprehended before. It not only means, "Be not weary in doing things that are right and good," but it also means, "Be not weary in doing well whatever you do." Be not weary in well doing the things you have to do. Be not weary in performing correctly and safely and carefully anything that is committed to your charge. Oh, then the field opened, the horizon enlarged; then the stars shone brighter as the text opened out into my view. Here is God's truth; here is the whole sweep of the Gospel from Sinai to the judgment. "Be not weary in doing well the things you have to do."

Some years ago I went down where they

were building a bridge among the mountains, and they had put in the stone for the abutment, and the contractor, who was placing an immense stone as a foundation corner for the abutment for the bridge, found it about an inch out of the line. The workmen said to him, "That will do, it is near enough; it will be a great deal of trouble to move it. It will hold the bridge all right." But the man looked at it and said, "I wish it were in the exact place where it ought to be. I would feel better about it; yet I think we will let it remain." After dinner, he came back and looked at it again. He was dissatisfied. It was not just where it ought to be. It was not on the line, and after a time, though he knew it would be a matter of considerable expense and take most of the afternoon, he started the machinery and lifted the enormous stone and set it again exactly on the line. When it was let down in place the man drew a long breath of satisfaction and said, "There, that is good for a thousand years!"

When the apostle taught us these things in this Scripture, he taught the sentiment of that man's heart. You and I might have been there for our day's wages, and after receiving our dollar and a half we might not care whether the stone was one inch out of

the way or not. It would not have made any difference to us. It was near enough. "Well enough" has cursed the world. "Well enough" has cursed souls. "Well enough" has overthrown business enterprises. "Well enough" has destroyed nations. "Well enough" has filled hell.

Oh, no, you and I might have said, "That is well enough," and taken our money. That contractor would have received more pay if he had left it in the first place. But he would not have had the satisfaction of soul. That was worth more to him than money. It was finally right. It was settled "for a thousand years." "The consciousness that it was right, that it was exact, was a comfort to his soul which money might not be able to purchase.

You will be tempted often, friend, to do things slightingly, to say "that is well enough"; not exactly right, but "well enough." But these Scriptures teach that we are not to be weary in attempting to do everything exactly as it ought to be done.

We shall be tempted to skimp our work. An illustration of this was written by one of our philanthropists in Boston concerning the sweat shops. These sweat shops consisted of little attics, illy heated and illy ventilated, into

which were gathered many very poor young women. They were paid such wages that they could scarcely clothe themselves or get sufficient food. Such places exist to-day, among the most hideous places of the world. If there is any kind of murder that deserves the gallows direct, it is the murder of young women through the sweat-shop system. One young woman who was in one of those attics received just the same pay as others, but every garment she made she finished thoroughly. Because she was faithful she earned not so much in the aggregate as the others, being paid by the piece. But she had the satisfaction of knowing that the person who wore the garments she made would wear those that were "well made."

Though she was poor, though she was deprived of opportunity to earn a comfortable living, though she was strongly tempted to slight her work, though no one on earth would seem to be able to discover that she neglected any part of it, yet that girl did her work thoroughly and well.

A customer of the store secured a garment made by this woman. He was the inventor of a sewing-machine. He endeavoured to make a garment like these. He purchased the cheap clothes for the purpose of ripping

them up and resewing them. When this garment came into his hands he found it was so carefully done, every stitch in its place, everything fully secured that he said, "That is wonderfully nice work to come from a sweat shop."

Going to the proprietor, he asked: "How much do you pay for a garment done like that?" Then he said to the owner: "It is not possible to do work like that so thoroughly, so completely, so carefully, for the money you paid." The proprietor boasted that it could be done, and that it was done in his shop. It raised a dispute. The man did not believe it was done in the shop, and the proprietor claimed that it was. They made an investigation, and they found out who did the work. They also found that all the work she did was done in the same careful way. She was afterwards taken into the store. The sweat shops were abolished in Boston by the agitation there, and that woman herself was the very first to give money to help Jennie Collins in her work for the suffering shop women of the city of Boston. She did her work thoroughly. She did it well for the joy of doing well. She was not weary in doing well, though the temptation would seem to have been extreme to do her work slightingly.

Men should not be weary in endeavouring to secure more accurate knowledge. We cannot fully know the truth. God is truth. Only the infinite can know everything, but we should study to know more and to be more and more accurate, to be near the light of perfect truth.

That was the characteristic of young Agassiz, when he was a student. If he had work assigned to him examining the forms of primitive life—the toe of the frog, the eye of the cat—he scrutinized them each with an accuracy that surprised his fellow students. He never seemed to be satisfied, never weary in striving to know more. He would come into the class and recite and tell what he then knew about the natural history of certain forms of animals, and he knew well, but he was not weary in doing better.

Nothing is well done that is not just as well as it can be done. Nothing short of perfection is well done if perfection can be reached. Only the very best work the worker can turn out is ever to be considered well done. That was the motto of Professor Agassiz himself. He pursued that until, teaching the students in Harvard College, he was among the leading minds of the earth. This characteristic, of doing thoroughly and

well the thing he had in hand, and being not weary in striving to do it better, make Agassiz' name one of the greatest names of earth.

Bougereau painted many beautiful paintings. But he destroyed many. He was not satisfied with them. They were often completed and were the admiration of his friends. Amateurs in painting considered them marvels of art. But he saw they were not right. He saw that the hand was too long, an eye was in the wrong relation, or the hair not fully suited to the person or place. After the picture was done he would rub it all off and begin again, being not weary in well-doing, because he loved his art and laboured for art, not for money. The apostle means in this text, "Work for art, not for money; work for perfection and satisfaction of one's soul, not merely for pay." Truth for truth's sake would have been Bougereau's expression, if you had asked him concerning his painting.

We should write not for the purpose of getting so much a line. We talk about the "penny-a-liner" in the newspapers and we speak of him with contempt. There is nothing more contemptible than the man who simply spends his time in writing for so much a line. An interesting story is told of a modern writer who is now one of the editors of

Harper's. It is only a few years since he wrote a story, and the Harpers, for some reason or other, published it. It was the laughing stock of the world. People said, "If Harpers are going to publish things like that, they will soon go down." But they were wise enough to see in that man an unquenchably divine ambition in life. He would do thoroughly what he did do; and if he did a thing to-day, he would do it better to-morrow.

Now he is the leading man of all the literary men of this country. He worked for perfection, for the love of writing; he desired to use the best words possible. If he found that an adjective was not sufficiently expressive, he would substitute another, and his manuscript is said to have been so written and rewritten and revised and re-revised as to be the despair of the printers to whom he sent his writings. He desired perfection, not simply the money he was to get for the writing. Be not weary in doing a thing well.

Be not weary in being beautiful. It is right to be beautiful. God intended woman should be lovely in form, in mind, in life, and in character. It is a duty to be so. The two different expressions of this text are shown here. Some wise women go to the

gymnasium and practice carefully certain physical exercises. Many a woman has by her own determination obtained a physique that was beautiful through persistent physical exercises, and has reached real beauty, while others have padded themselves as shams.

This text condemns this position: no person should be satisfied with the sham.

The woman who desires to be most perfect must first have a perfect ideal, and strive towards that ideal. True womanhood is real!

One day at a hospital a woman was brought in decked with diamonds, clothed with a very expensive hat, and very costly shoes from a fashionable establishment. But otherwise she was dressed in rags and filth. When the hospital nurses saw the contrast they said, "What a false, barren, filthy heart this woman must have to be such an utter sham; to appear outside as a whitened sepulchre and within full of dead men's bones." Everything was suggestive of wickedness, of internal heart rottenness. This text teaches us not to be weary in doing well, though no one else but ourselves shall see the work, though no one else but ourselves shall enjoy it; we are to do things well for the love of well doing.

We should read, we should know and teach. But that is not enough. This text goes farther and says we must read well. Webster's experience with the books of Milton is instructive. He secured Milton's "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." He read them through. He said to a friend that he did not think they were interesting. His friend said, "Webster, you have not really read Milton if you talk that way about him. You have not understood him. I advise you to take that book and read it again, and take at least three weeks to it instead of one day, as you did before." Webster took Milton and read "Paradise Lost," line by line, until he came to that sublime passage:

"Hail, holy light, offspring of heaven
First-born! Or of the eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblamed?
Since God is light, and never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity:
Dwelt then in thee, bright effluence of bright-essence increate!"

When he appreciated that fully and when the sublimity of the language flashed upon him, he took the poem and hastened around to his friend's house with a book still open in his hand, and said to his friend, "I thank you! I have found so much in this book I

did not dream was there!" He took three weeks to read Milton. Then he knew it, as he read it "well." He read it thoroughly, he reread it, until he comprehended it. He was not weary in doing it well. Oh, to read a book well! How many read as a half sham! I read this Bible in the same way. I have read it to you often: "Be not weary in well-doing." Month after month and year after year I have repeated it, and only within a day or two did I understand so much of it. I stopped short of doing it well. It is better to do a small thing well than to half do a large thing.

How often singers do that. It is better to leap over a hurdle and get over than to attempt to jump over the moon and fall in the mud.

How many a cultivated singer, who is excellently fitted for concert work, or well trained for religious song, will strive to some operatic height that is so far beyond her reach that her voice turns to the scream of the eagle before she has reached the highest notes. The foolish thing thinks she is gaining favour for herself in the world to strive for that unreachable height. Yet how true it is that one had better do a small thing well than to try to do a larger thing and fail.

So it is with the church service. We ought to do it well. Now there is a way of doing a church service well. You may say that it depends upon the preacher or the music. No, it depends upon the hearer. If you are listening well you cannot hear the Bible read without some benefit coming to your soul. Each church service should be an improvement on the previous one. Attending a church service is not for naught; it is not for foolishness; it is not for mere form; it is intended to secure growth in grace. He who does the very best he possibly can with it, uses every kind of opportunity and influence in it, will be blessed for attending the service.

So it is in being a Christian. Do not be satisfied with having the name of a Christian, or having your name on the church roll. Don't be satisfied with that. Know in your very soul that you are saved. Know that God's salvation, through Christ, has been applied to your heart. Be real, be sincere, be not weary in striving to get nearer to God, nearer and nearer, having His service more surely at heart. I have said already what I would like to emphasize strongly, that anywhere short of the very best is not well done. That is true of salvation. If it is possible for

you to do anything better than you now do it, it is not well done, and the omission becomes a sin.

Are you doing your work as well as it can be done, living in your home as well as you can, doing by those you love as well as you might? Are you as industrious as you might be, as saving as you might be, as generous as you might be, as merciful as you ought to be? Have you left undone many things you might have done, and only half-done many things which might have been wholly done? If so you are a sinner before God. Get down and confess it. Get down and promise God that you will not weary in doing well whatever you have to do.

There was a young boy in New York who wrapped the goods in the store, and because he wrapped them so carefully and tied them with such nicety the customers' attention was called to the artistic manner in which it was done. He was finally called to a better position, and then into partnership, and he became a great benefactor in the city of New York. He could give his millions afterwards because he began by doing his work well. Though he was paid then only two or three dollars a week above his board, he tied each package so carefully that he did it well, bet-

ter than all the other boys. He had the honour which he ought to have had, and the inestimable satisfaction of conscience in knowing that whatever he did, he did well.

Governor Talbott, of Massachusetts, was elected upon the saying of General Swift, of that state, who said to the convention, "I nominate a man for governor of the state of Massachusetts, who, when he was a farmer's boy, hoed to the end of the row." It became a cry all through the state, "He hoed to the end of the row!" The weeds were all down, even beyond the last hill of corn. There was nothing left in the field to compete with the potatoes or corn. He hoed to the end of the row. When they found that that was his characteristic, and recognized the truthful application of the proverb, he was elected by one of the greatest majorities that was ever given to a governor in Massachusetts.

Christ is our noble example. He doeth all things well. Not only one thing, but all things, well. We may not be able to do more than one or two things as well as we would, and not be able to do many things thoroughly as we ought. Yet we can hold up this ideal. There is Christ. He doeth all things well. He doeth to the very best everything that He does.

When the meaning of that text swept in upon me, and I saw Christ so high and men so low; He so perfect and men so imperfect; He so divine, we so finite; He so pure, we so sinful; oh! then the Gospel came home to me, and in humbleness of heart, my soul sinking down before God, I asked Him for another opportunity to begin again, that I might strive to do well the things God gave me to do.

This same spirit I urge upon you: Be not weary in doing good things, but especially be not weary in doing those good things just as thoroughly as it is possible for each to be done.

X

PITY BRINGS STRENGTH

"My strength is made perfect in weakness." (*2 Cor. xii. 9.*)

IN Persepolis—or in the village which stands near that ancient capital of the Babylonian Empire—in 1869 a party of travellers were invited to visit the governor of the village. The visit, characteristic of Eastern habits and traits, was full of surprises and symbols intended to entertain and instruct the guests from the Western world. I was but a young man, and yet the vision of that evening's visit becomes clearer now with every passing year. There were many entertainments. Beautiful young women came out and sang and danced; the fountains played in the courtyard in a great variety of colours under the light, and the music seemed to be tuned to the sound of the waterfall. But the surprise that was the greatest to me, and which illustrates the thought of the text, was late in the evening, when the guests had grown weary with the many things they had enjoyed. A tent

cloth was drawn across the entire courtyard rolling across and enclosing it like a roof. Then, after a few minutes of curious waiting, a door was thrown open in the side of the residence, or palace, and from it came a fresh breeze loaded with the most delightsome odours. It was as fresh as the rose in the dewy morning; it was as soft as the lullaby of a mother; it was as uplifting and inspiring as some positive stimulant; it filled the whole room into which the courtyard had been made with a restfulness, a sweetness of enjoyment, a bath of the soul and body which was soothingly restful beyond description. I know not how it was done, and I had not the wisdom then to inquire, but through the years I have often looked back to the visit in that Eastern land of the Euphrates and wondered if that door is still being opened in the governor's home, and if the visitors are still entertained by the incoming of that draught, or bath, of precious odour.

The apostle said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." When the company in that Eastern palace were weary, the door was thrown open and in flooded those refreshing odours. It was only when we were weak, only when we had reached a wearisome stage in our visit, or were supposed to have done

so, that the door was thrown open and that delightsome experience enjoyed. The apostle says, "My weakness is the source of my strength. My strength is made perfect in weakness. It is only when I am weak that I am truly strong."

Not long since I was reading the chapter on Saul's anointing by Samuel. I read that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul and made him another man. Then, a little farther on, I read that the multitude followed him "whose heart the Lord had touched," and I was surprised that, after all these years of thinking upon Scriptural things, I had not realized the difference between the mechanical coming of the Spirit of God into Saul's heart and life, and the conversion of a soul to Christ and God. I had always confused the thoughts, until last night, in a wakeful half-dream, I thought of Saul as a conduit for the Spirit. I thought how the outside of a water pipe is perfectly dry, although the water continues in a flood to press on towards its level in the valley below. It was the same with Saul's life, and instead of interpreting the expression, he "became another man" as a soul revolution, it seems to have meant a temporary use of Saul as an instrument for the accomplishment of God's great purpose.

Saul seems to have been a mere conduit for the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God took possession of him when it had need of him. It does not seem that Saul, as his subsequent life showed, was really a converted man at this time. The Spirit of God flowed through him, but he was completely dry, although floods of a spiritual kind went through his soul.

Meditation upon it has sent the confusion from my mind and the Scripture seems so clearly defined now that I understand what before was confused in my thought. People have asked me to explain how Saul could have done what he afterwards did do, and how David did what he afterwards did, if his heart was with God in the sense which we mean when we speak of a conversion to Jesus Christ. Saul's heart was filled with the Spirit as the door was opened, and into his life came this atmosphere, this God-Spirit, this perfume, inspiring him, raising him up and giving him strength in the hour of his weakness.

The door that was opened was the door of human pity. We read in Proverbs that "he that pitieth the poor lendeth to the Lord," and that the Lord pitieth His children as a father pitieth his own. We learn that the way to the activities of a man is to open the door of his

pity; for when that door is opened all the perfume, richness and inspiration of God's Spirit comes in and inspires him to deeds he would not do, and sends him out on messages on which he would not run, and he accomplishes things he had not before understood, or purposed.

So in the life of Samson. I do not think that Samson was a godly man in the sense in which we now understand it. We read that the Spirit of God took possession of that man, and then he secured this wonderful strength. We find that the people of Israel and of Judah were being so terribly oppressed that Samson's patriotic heart seems to have been filled with pity for them. He seems to have been a rough man of the mountains, full of impulses for good, yet very rough. He certainly was not a Christian. But when he saw the oppression, when he felt, as Saul had felt, the pains and the privations, the disgrace and the humiliation of his nation, he pitied the people. He saw them labouring in the fields for crops of which the Philistines would rob them; he saw them bringing up children that would soon be dashed to pieces. He saw them in trouble; he saw their falling tears and heard their sighs, and his great, rough, mountainous heart opened towards

them and he pitied them. As soon as he pitied them the door opened and the Spirit of the Lord came into Samson, and he became a giant who, with the jaw-bone of an ass, could defeat an army, and who could, with one arm, lift the massive gates of Gaza and carry them to the mountain top. Pity is the door through which the Spirit of God enters into the lives of men, whether they are godly or not.

Years ago, I saw a picture of the scene when the Queen of Austria and Hungary, Maria Teresa, took it to the knights and warriors of Hungary. How the Spirit of God and the spirit of patriotism seemed to come like flooding waves into their hearts! They pitied her and her motherhood; they pitied the little child which should have inherited a throne, but from whom it was being taken. They pitied their own land for its suffering because of foreign tyranny. As soon as a strong pity took possession of the hearts of those warriors, their swords were flung forth to the light of day, and there, in excited thousands, in the presence of the little child exhibited to them, they swore to die to preserve the inheritance of that child. God's strength came to the hearts of those soldiers when pity flung open the doors of their hearts.

James I was a child in Scotland, and on account of religious persecution, he was being driven from his rights and his inheritance, which the people thought he was entitled to for their good. But that little child, that little baby, was so helpless in its weakness. What could it do? Nothing. It could scarcely call for food. It must be fed and nursed. It could not walk; it could not talk; it could not govern. But in its supreme weakness it awakened the pity of those grand Scottish hearts from the plains to the Highlands, and that baby, because he was weak, received the homage of the nation, while Mary Queen of Scots, because she was strong, was set aside with no heart opened in sympathy towards her except those who had a selfish object in following her.

I remember a day in December, 1859, when nearly the whole of New England was in tears. That morning, from eleven to twelve o'clock, we all sat in gloomy silence, and we wept while John Brown was being hanged at Charleston, Virginia. How we pitied him! How we pitied his family and his sons! All the North pitied John Brown. Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon the North and roused men from their lethargy to real manhood, and that Spirit of the Lord turned itself in

volumes towards the slaves—the poor slave of the South, being whipped, owned and sold, whose food was furnished at the will of another; who could not worship God except as his master willed. How we pitied the slaves! I remember sitting at my mother's knee and hearing the story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and crying for an hour as she read it. So did many another child in the North. Not that we were more righteous than others were—not that; not that we loved God better than did men in the South, but a great pity for the slave and for John Brown had come into our hearts, and the spirit of an ordinary man became a Samson. We were not so good, but our pity enabled God to use us.

But we hear worse things now, and they move us not. If they did, the American people would arise in their might and there would be no more of such fearful things to disgrace this nation. But there is not pity enough, and where there is not pity God's Spirit comes not in, and we will all be a set of contemptible cowards until we pity enough to be brave enough to say that such disgraces shall never occur again.

The Jews have suffered. Yesterday in all their synagogues, on their Sabbath, they prayed in tears for God to save their perse-

cuted people in Russia. May pity again take possession of our hearts and we again become Americans and say to the world that anywhere on earth, where man is oppressed, he has the sympathy, direct and open, of the American people. We said that when we were weak, when we numbered less than twelve millions—we said it to the world. When we numbered only forty millions we declared that oppression, anywhere on earth, should have the direct succour and help of the American people. But now we approach nearly one hundred millions in number, and we lie down in our contemptible peace and let the oppression go on. We do not even "pass a resolution" in favour of the deliverance of the oppressed. There is a time right now when pity should open the door to this generous, strong Spirit of God.

There was a time when the Armenians suffered; and the Armenians might have been helped out of their trouble if America and England had simply expressed their sympathy, or if they had really had any pity. When I think of Miss Barton labouring among that oppressed and suffering people, through that famine and through those wars, and what she must have seen, it seems to me as if she must have been ashamed of her own

land, that we should do so little and should have so little care. God's Spirit was not in us ; our pity had not been roused and consequently the odours of the air from the very hills of heaven we did not and do not know.

Washington pitied these colonies and gave himself, in his aristocratic estate, for the benefit of those he pitied. God's Spirit came into his noble heart.

The suggestion that our strength is made by our weakness is shown in the fact that God is called our Father. A father always helps the weakest, he is always tender and patient with the weakest. How weak and helpless the little babe is, but how it opens the heart of the father because it is so weak. It is so little ; there is so small an opportunity for the exhibition of strength that the father's entire power is aroused to its highest force. It is his, and his fatherhood makes him do almost anything for that little one. And so God's almighty Fatherhood comes especially to the weak. He is a God of the fatherless and of the widow, the God of the slave and of the oppressed, the God of the sick. He is especially strong towards those who need Him most.

In her weakness dwells woman's greatest power. Many a wife gets very little atten-

tion from her husband because she is so strong that she can take good care of herself. Sometimes the sweetest and richest things in domestic life lose all their force and value because the woman is too strong and forceful. A man loves, not a weak woman, in one sense, but a feminine woman in another sense. He loves one that is in a measure dependent, that he may exercise his strength to supply what she lacks. We do not want women to go on the battle-field ; we do not want them to do the fighting in the open, because we claim the privilege of doing that. Men will become very, very weak when women become very, very strong. The reverse must necessarily come.

I have often thought that the highest possible calling on earth for a woman was to be a nurse. There can be nothing higher than ministering to those who are weak, and the pity that fills the heart of one caring for the unfortunate and the weak precedes the inpouring of the Spirit of God. I should not be preaching the Gospel if a little boy had not felt such great pity. Because he once felt such great pity he was moved to such deeds of heroism that I am inspired all the time by the love I have for that boy.

Oh, to be an invalid is sad ; to be a "shut

in" is deserving of sympathy; yet there are some "shut ins" who are in a continuous heaven of surrounding sympathy and tenderness which the strong yearn for day by day. It has its compensations to be a "shut in."

The incoming of that devilish spirit into the hearts of men that leads them to do only for the strong we all recognize to be wicked. He that helps only the powerful is to be despised. When David had won a mighty victory for his nation against great odds, then all the tribes of Israel came around and said, "You have always been a relative of ours; you are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and we have always loved you, we have always liked you." That is the world's way. There is no success like success. Let some man be suddenly raised to power, though no greater now than he was before he was known, yet because he has met with some success, we all come and praise him. That is the devilish spirit and directly in contrast with the spirit expressed in this text.

I was out in the Monongahela Valley not long ago at a place where they had dug out twenty-three miners. I hardly believed it possible that such vast quantities of material could be dug out, that so many ditches could be dug and so many shafts put in in seven

days. But those workers were trying to succour their friends under ground, and they were inspired with double strength as they thought of the helpless victims buried in that mine, and they became Samsons because God's Spirit came unto them.

The strikes would all stop if there was pity enough. In a manufacturing village in Massachusetts there is one factory that gives employment to the whole community. But there has never been a strike there, or a suggestion of a strike. It is not because the wages paid are higher or the hours of work are less, but it is because of a little crippled girl. She is the daughter of the owner of the factory, and when she is carried out the workmen see her and speak to her ; she smiles back at them and the home of that owner is almost sacred to those workmen because of the fact that that little crippled girl is there. They regard her with such tenderness that they are willing to receive suggestions and to discuss their troubles like brothers on account of the influence that she exerts upon them. The owner of the factory also feels her power, and he is willing to discuss matters with his workmen, and the consequence is that those men would not consider for a moment the idea of a strike.

I remember General Sherman's advance at Dallas, Ga., in 1864. We were stationed at the west of Dallas, and told to fire in case we should see any one. After waiting for some time a number of Confederates were seen coming from the houses striving to hide in the cellars or to get away towards the river. The whole corps were drawn up in battle array, ready to fire, when the officer, riding down the line, shouted, "Halt! Halt! Halt!" Why halt? A little boy was running down the street. Hundreds of the enemy were in sight, and our army was ready to fire, but when this little child was seen toddling down the street, the men were ordered to resume their position, and not a shot was fired until that little child was safely out of the way—in fact, until a cavalry company made a charge down the street and placed the little child in a house. Then the firing began. The whole army was stopped by that little child. If it had been a man they would have shot him down. If he had even been a man of peace, or an old man, strong in power and years, they would have fired, and sacrificed his life for their country's good; but the little toddling baby won the consideration of the whole army.

The apostle is continually impressing the

thought upon his followers that they must not be ashamed of their weakness. He teaches us, too, that we must use our strength as far as we can, for God has given us our strength to be used, and pretended weakness is hypocrisy; but if we are weak after we do all we can, He will fill our weakness with His almighty strength.

XI

A SHINING FACE

"And Moses knew not that his face shone." (*Ex. xxix. 29.*)

THE Sonora Indian tribe, of California, is noted for its "fire men," men whose faces shine with an electric display, so that in the night-time they can be seen a long distance. They are feared and worshipped because of this.

A great German writer says that every man or woman is thus illuminated. That is, that the activity of the forces of nature continually generates certain electric forces which express themselves in light, so that in certain circumstances, with a sufficiently acute eyesight, they may be seen in the dark, because of the light vibrations which are going forth from them all the time. When I read this dissertation, I thought of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ on Mount Hermon, and how His whole body did shine. It was perhaps only an intensified condition of that which characterizes all of us.

Music is but a form of vibration, and consequently when we feel, or send out, its forces, they may be felt or seen by others. They may be both seen and felt, not by the ordinary eye perhaps, not by ordinary ear-drums, and yet they are real sounding forces, they are electric discharges, they are forces of light, all being of the same nature, differing only in their degree of vibration, just as a high note differs from a lower one in the rate of wave motion.

Now Moses' face shone. He did not know it. He did not know how beautiful his features were. He did not know how his eyes flashed with that brighter and diviner light which had come to him on the mountain top.

I remember the day when we encamped on that mountain top at Sinai, where Moses stood, and how when the evening shades began to fall there seemed to be around us the ancient forms. Imagination brought them back in clearest view, and it seemed to two of us who were companions together, as if we were living it over again. And when darkness came, we could imagine the illuminated cloud, the light of God, the communication of the voice of God. We could see Moses walking down that rough pathway, down the ledges of the cliffs into the deep,

narrow valley, his face gleaming so that they saw how beautiful the communication of God must have been.

In his story of "three Johnnies in one," Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes says there is first "the John that one thinks he is."

Reading back in the life of Moses, I wonder whether Moses did realize his own condition at all. If he thought anything about it, what was his view of it? What do we think of ourselves? Can we trust our view? Are we sure that we estimate ourselves aright?

In Boston a man came along the street, staggered against me, smelling of liquor, and saying, "Who am I?" I told him he ought to know, but he said he did not. I took him home with me, walking a long distance to my house, and kept him all night, and on the way out he told me that he could overcome a dozen men in a single fistic battle; that he knew more than the mayor of Boston (and that was no great boast); that he had friends who were influential, high up in affairs, and what a great man he was, and it took all his breath to tell it. I put the drunken man to bed. I had to watch by him to make it safe for my family. In the morning, after sleeping from four o'clock on,

he came to himself out of his stupor. Then he had a second view of himself, and the view he had then was a mighty contrast with what he had the night before. Now, with his head aching, his limbs aching, and feeling disgraced and ashamed that he had been taken home by a stranger, and that his family did not know where he was, he cursed himself with the bitterest of curses. He wanted to commit suicide. He wanted to die. He said, "I am not worthy to live. I am nothing but a degraded, low, miserable worm of the earth." Two different views he had of himself. I mention this to show that we all have different views of ourselves at different times, and neither of them seems to be trustworthy. The second "Johnnie" is the one which others think him to be.

The view that the people had of Moses' face, and the view he took of his own face were very different things. Moses was a very modest man, underestimating his ability. He said to the Lord, "I cannot speak, I have a stammering tongue and a weak voice. I cannot express myself." Underestimating himself. How rare it is for a person ever to see himself as he really is. It may sometimes happen, yet usually we are far astray.

I talked with a young woman yesterday,

who said she wished she had a college education, and wondered if it were possible. "But," she said, "it would not be of much use to me. I could not use a college education. I could not do what other women do in the world," underestimating, all the time, her strength and ability. While I knew, by observation, that she had the genius to do great things if she would, yet it was almost useless for me to endeavour to persuade her that such was the case.

I remember a young lady under similar circumstances, saying that she did not know that she could be of any use in this world. I told her of a dozen things, and said, "If you only knew yourself, you would set yourself to writing. You ought to be an author." She smiled as if I were only making sport of her. Afterwards, circumstances drove her to that kind of work, and when, the other day, she told me she was receiving $3,000 a year and was soon to go still higher in her literary work, I thought of her as the poor girl who earned $3.00 a week because she failed to get an accurate estimate of what she was really worth. That is almost universally the case with women. Because of their feminine instincts, because of their natural love for home, and the expectation

of home life, they abandon all thought of their genius, of their intellectual capacity, of their influence upon the world in other walks of life. They do not see their own identity.

We cannot judge ourselves. We either underestimate or overestimate, or put a wrong value on different traits, and seldom see ourselves, as Burns said, "As ithers see us."

Some man thinks he can sin and it will not be discovered. Some man thinks he can do wrong and not be punished. Some man thinks he can do what others have never done, that he is so gigantic he can overcome the laws of nature, and the laws of God. Some man thinks he can drink whiskey and not benumb his mind. Some man thinks he can eat to excess and not destroy his appetite. Some man thinks he can break down all the laws of nature himself and never be sick, while all around him other people are falling by the way. Never a thought of death really comes to the minds of most men. Never a thought that there is an end to this life and must be a beginning to some other. How absurd is the view they have of themselves.

What a false vision is given by a hysterical patient of herself, of her ability, of her circumstances. Everything is gloomy, sad.

Everything is full of sorrow and woe and wretchedness. The "blues" destroy every man's vision.

> "All looks infected that the infected spy,
> As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye."

A dyspeptic never sees the world as it is. The sun is never as bright; the trees are never as green; people never as interesting; faces never as beautiful; fruits never as luscious; the flowers never have the same perfume, to a dyspeptic. He sees an unreal world. If he has been dyspeptic all his life and gets out of it, and looks back upon it, he will never recognize any place where he has been, or any person he has met. It is strange that Moses did not see that.

In the old day they had a scapegoat. The sinner who had committed some awful crime would come to the priest, and put his hands on the goat's head. Then the priest would repeat the formula and send the goat into the wilderness, and the sins of the man went with the scapegoat into the wilderness, and he was free from sin. Now that, as I present it, sounds absurd, and yet a deeper study of human nature shows that the form was a necessity. It accomplished that very thing.

A celebrated doctor in Chicago experimented with some of his hysterical patients who worried, and told them to take a box, place it on the bureau, and every morning they should get up, take hold of the worry at their lips as though it were an actual capsule, lift the cover of the box, put their worry in and shut the box. "Now," said he, "try to believe that the worry is there." He declared that in seven out of the eight cases it was a complete cure for the worry. Because the suggestion of putting that sin or that worry in the box enabled them so to overcome, that they escaped the trouble itself.

So when these men had repented of their sins but would worry lest they were not forgiven, the priest went through this motion of putting the sins on that goat's head and sending the goat into the wilderness. The suggested thought, the very impulse of the impression, was so reactive upon the person himself, that he got into the habit of thinking his sins were sent away, and soon forgot them and slept in peace. A man thus seeing himself finds he was not the man he thought he was. He worries, and in his worry he was one man. When his sins and worries are taken away, then he is another man; and how

shall we tell what manner of man we are when the same man has so many different views of himself in every day's experience?

Other people do not often estimate us aright, though in some cases they are nearer right than we are. But the world is equally in error with ourselves because it views us from an entirely different experience. You look upon me and judge me, but you cannot see the inheritance of my fathers and mothers during the generations past, which has developed in my system and in my mind without any responsibility of my own ; and you cannot possibly understand the thousand myriads of influences which have generated through the ages, and all combined in this personality. You can judge only partially of yourself, and are much less able to judge others.

This deep thought was evidently in the Saviour's mind when He stated we should not judge each other, that we could not possibly judge each other accurately. We could see that a man's face shone, we could see that, but we could not read his character, we could not read his soul, we could not outline his ideas. He is a country unknown to us. Every one present is unknown to every other. Even man and wife when they have lived

together for forty years are still unacquainted with each other. They cannot correctly judge each other however harmonious they may be, because each has experiences in some way different from those of the other.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said there was also a third John. Not what a man thinks of himself,—not what other people think of him, is the truth, for that is nothing but reputation. The real thing is what God thinks of him. What is heaven's view?

I had a dream, a strange, eventful dream, that one I loved for many, many years came into my room through the open door and sat down on the edge of my bed, and talked with me as of yore. In the dream, if it were all a dream, she said to me, "I have seen you all the time since I left the body." When I asked her if my name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life, she smiled, but said, "I am not permitted to answer."

I think the loved ones gone before us, living in that state where they know all things, see us just as we are, get a view of us which leads them often to smile when we are in sorrow, and, perhaps, leads them to tears when we are in smiles. I know not but if the holy spirit of God be grieved, others may grieve in the land beyond. I cannot quite

believe that they do, but I believe they get the accurate view of us, know all about us.

Heaven's view of us includes all the generations past, all the influences of heredity that have come down to us, all the acquaintances we have had, all the education we have secured. It knows us just as we are.

XII

THE SPIRITUAL FOUNTAIN

"And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord." (*Amos iii. 18.*)

THIRTY years ago, almost to the very day, I sat on a large broken column of some ancient temple in the city of Nazareth, in Palestine. I had gone out early because I wished to meditate by myself, and drink in from the scene those sacred associations which can be obtained only when one meditates in silence. It was near the fountain of the Virgin. I sat at one side, so that no person would speak to me or interfere with me; not knowing their language, and they not knowing mine, there was little danger of disturbance. I sat there from the rising of the sun for an hour or two, and watched the coming and going of the people to that fountain where the Virgin Mary went to draw water during all those early years of Christ's life. One cannot get from travel the real spiritual uplift unless he have time, and the freedom of mind and heart to sit down and

muse until he feels the sacredness of the place and the holiness of its associations.

That morning is indelibly fastened on my mind. I can see again almost every face as the Nazarenes came from the hillside, down their steep streets into the valley, to the fountain of the Virgin, with its broken and rude brickwork, remains of some ancient church that had been torn down by wars, or destroyed otherwise by time. From the side of the brick wall flowed forth this water, about four or five feet above the walk. Upon their heads and upon their shoulders the people brought water-pots, and placed them in order, one after another, under the mouth of the fountain. When the water-pots were filled, each took his own burden and carried it away. Some carried it up to the high hill of Nazareth, some along the valley to some distant hill, some into the nearer and better class of houses, and some departed far away into the fields. It was a continual throng, coming and going, singing, laughing, talking, intermingling in a changing panorama of human life.

No one can realize what the Scripture means when it speaks of the fountain, and uses it as a metaphor for salvation, unless he has seen, or realized, what a fountain is in

an Eastern land. It is the centre of social life; it is the focus of all forms of business; it is the origin of so much that contributes to life and happiness, that the fountain is considered to be the very heart of the community. A farmer came by me, driving his flock of sheep; the little lambs were bleating and leaping about, playing with each other as he drove them near to the fountain. Then at the order of the Sheik of the village, the great procession of private persons paused, and waited until he had secured sufficient water with which to water his flocks in the rough trough near by. I saw him bring each sheep to the trough one after another. The shepherd knew each sheep. He knew even each lamb. If one had not been to the trough he knew it, and went after it and brought the lamb or sheep to the water. Then with his long crook and staff he led them back into the field, and I heard his cheerful song as he disappeared over the hill in the direction of the Sea of Galilee.

Procession after procession passed by, and as I saw the men come and drink at the fountain, and the women come and fill their water-pots and pass on, I realized how wonderfully expressive of spiritual truth is the word "fountain" in the Scriptures. Hun-

dreds of times it is used as an expression of God's kindness, mercy and love—the flowing forth naturally from the heart of God of that affection for mankind. As I saw the people carry away that water, it occurred to me how great is the variety of uses to which they put it. There were those who came with their great jars for water which was intended to cleanse the house, to wash up the floor, and to cleanse the front steps. I could tell the difference between those who came for that purpose and those who came for drinking water by the shape and form of the water-pots they carried upon their heads. Some collected it for the purpose of cooking the food of the family. Others secured it for drinking purposes. Others drew it for medicine. Others carried it into the fields for irrigation, and others washed themselves at the fountain, and then passed away with clean faces and clean hands to their duties in some shop near by.

It was interesting to me to notice how a little carpenter boy came and washed his hands and face, and cleansed his feet very carefully at the foot of the fountain, and then went up into a shop near by, to engage in his labour as they did of old.

But the most impressive thing—it seemed

like a Providence to me, though it must have been the usual custom of every-day life—was when there came by me with her bright robes and head-gear, with a face flushed, with beautiful eyes, dark, large and rich, a Nazarene woman, carrying upon her shoulder her little baby boy. He was nearly naked, and sat upon her shoulder, clasping her head with his little hand. She held a water-pot upon the other shoulder, and placed it under the fountain. With the kindness of one of the shepherd boys the water-pot was placed back upon her shoulder, and this young woman passed back by me. So came the Virgin Mary in her day to that fountain, and took water from the very same place, and may have disappeared in the same way.

Sometimes I have been disheartened—God forgive! Sometimes we have all felt as if we might do a thousandfold more than we do, and in that we are partly correct and partly wrong. God forgive the wrong! Sometimes we think because age is coming on us that God's work is aging, forgetting that His work has always been fresh and new. The Church of Christ in any town or city or village has been a spiritual fountain, giving out to the community, like the fountain of the Virgin at Nazareth, its great variety of life-

giving hope and joy. There is a spiritual atmosphere around a real church of Christ that is like the continual, ceaseless flow of the fountain of the Virgin. I noticed as I sat there that many came and drank at the fountain. They put their mouths under it, and drank of it, or caught the water in a cup, or in their hands, lapping it like the men of Gideon. Women would come laughing and cheering each other, and playfully spatter each other from the flowing fountain; they also drank and went away to the fields or other work. Many came to the fountain only to drink there. I take that as a wonderful metaphor. Many come to the church to drink in the spiritual sustenance that is given at the church, with no thought of carrying any away. I do not think that there is any real spiritual fountain unless people can drink at it, for the mistake in church life is the thought worship consists in singing, speaking, or praying in form. That is the great error that has misled the Church for all the ages and hindered the growth of God's kingdom. The people have not drunk at the fountain. Many of you can testify that people come into the church—it is not any more true of this church than others—and feel that they have come into the presence of

God. They feel the spiritual influence of Christ Himself, and while they may not remember anything that is said, may forget all about the hymn or even the Scriptures that are read, yet they go away refreshed, supported, strengthened. There is something miraculous, indeed, about this. If a man comes into the church, and does not get this spiritual uplift, then he has not received what he might just as well have received. He has not drunk at the fountain. The fountain is flowing—it is free to all. Any man can drink, any man can sincerely put his soul into the worship of Christ when he goes into the house of God, if he will. A remarkable illustration is right here in the house this morning. There sits in this house one who is always here on a stormy day, a lady who has looked me in the face for all the years since I have been in The Temple. But she cannot hear a word of what I say—never has heard me speak here. Yet she comes every Sunday, and looks into my face and into the faces of the chorus; and gets from this service a spiritual uplift, a peace of mind in spiritual thought that perhaps few of us who can hear do get. She says that when she comes into the church and sits down in the sacred place, there comes flowing into her spirit a

sense of God's presence, a peace that she could not get along without. She says her spiritual life depends upon her coming here and sitting here. Unless one does drink at the fountain while he is at the fountain he loses the very best part of church life and church work.

But I noticed the great variety of sizes which those water-pots represented. There were large, strong women, built of giant stock, who came with little water-pots, that would not hold a quart; and there are thousands who come to the house of the Lord and to the fountain of God now and go away with only a quart bottle filled. I heard a minister say in a sermon that if human jugs come for a small blessing they get it. If they come for a large one they get that. It depends entirely upon the faith they exercise when they start from home to go to the fountain in the house of the Lord.

There sat in this house a son who had left his home in anger. There was an impressiveness about the place that he could not resist. He went out of the house before the sermon began, went home to his parents and frankly asked their forgiveness. He began his Christian life because of the impressiveness of this place upon him. Other churches have the same impression upon people. It

is the fountain for the sinner to wash away his sins.

Last October an elevator boy came in here and sat in the balcony, away back of the chorus; and as he looked upon this scene, which he had never visited before, and saw the thousands of faces looking towards the organ and heard the music, the scene, or the spiritual environment, impressed him so greatly that he at once surrendered his heart to the Lord Jesus, and he has joined the church. He came and drank at the fountain, and he carried away a heart full of the precious, cleansing, spiritual inflow.

A daughter, disobedient, silly, wild, came in here, and whispered, talked and laughed during the service. But the last verse of the last hymn broke down her spirit and she wept. They thought she was ill. She said nothing. She went home, prayed for herself, called her mother aside, and said: "Mother, I wish to be converted." She was converted, and converted by drinking at the fountain. Though she came to scoff, she indeed went away to pray.

How many a widow has come into the house of God with a heart broken, with a flood of sorrow sweeping in a dark, awful shadow; the sense of absence; the awful

longing for affection, for care, for protection, for the sound of a loving voice, and the touch of a loving hand! She has turned towards her God and said, "Lord, save me from this awful woe!" She has testified that there came a feeling of God's actual sympathy, of Christ's real presence, that drove from her heart forever that sorrow. She has drank at the fountain of the Lord.

A market man came into the church one day. He had an awful temper, so much so that his partner had refused to have anything more to do with him, and insisted upon a dissolution of partnership. He came to the church. He sat in the church and the impressions of the sacred hour came upon him. He went to his home and there read a chapter of the Bible, and then meeting his partner he said to him: "I confess I am wrong. I have a violent temper. I know I have. I don't blame you at all. If you desire to dissolve the partnership you may dissolve it; but if you desire, I will go on and promise you I will do better." They have gone on as loving brothers since.

How many a drunkard has come into the house of God and felt the sin of his drinking and has gone home to confess it to the family and turn around completely!

I received a letter from Manila, from a sailor who said he was once in this church. He wrote that the chorus sang, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow," and the song had followed him through the stormy seas, through calm and sunshine, all around the world. He had drank at the fountain.

Wives that have been abused have found their husbands coming home from church in a repentant mood, and with a determination to begin as lovers once more and live the life they ought to live. Salesmen travelling over distant parts of the country go into the church, drink at the fountain and go forth to their travels entirely different in their ambitions, blessing the world and helping it wherever they can. Homeless women that live in boarding-houses in the city, labouring to earn a living, go into the church. They think they have no friends in the city, and yet in the church they feel that somehow they are in a cheerful, helpful, inspiring atmosphere. Teachers go forth and teach in their schoolhouses with fresh life, who could not do it but for the church services. How many a churchless minister has wandered into some church and has heard encouraging words and felt the inspiring pres-

ence of the Spirit and gone out to establish some humble mission which afterwards grew into some mighty church, because he himself drank from the fountain! How many an ignorant boy has come into the church and there has come to him there the desire and ambition to become a strong and useful man, and he has gone out to spend his odd hours over books and make himself a man instead of wasting them in smoking, loafing in pool-rooms and in bad society! He has drank at the fountain. How many Sunday-school teachers teach because they drank at the fountain in some church service, and how many are singing in heaven because they came in and drank in this church or in some other church! I think of the sainted, the roll of which is now becoming so large, whom I have known in life and loved, who are now singing with the angels of God, because they came into the church and drank from the fountain.

Yes, the church is a fountain. Brethren, don't be discouraged; sisters, don't be unhappy; the church is stronger than it ever was; it is doing more good than it ever did, and it is going to do vastly more than it has ever done. The world is full of hope. You go to the church to take in a draught of

hope, to get new, fresh life, to obtain an ambition that shall reach forward into the coming years. The church has not done its best things in the past. It is going to do its greatest and highest things in the future. What has been done for the sick and the poor and the ignorant, what has been done for the advancement of the Gospel, is but the beginning of the great onflowing of the fountain that shall forever flow from the Church of Jesus Christ. Oh, brethren, let us be happy, hopeful and cheerful, trusting in God, looking into the future years and planning for the mighty things yet to be.

The time has come for us to come to this refreshing fountain of salvation that God has set forth in the house of the Lord, and drink deep and go out stronger for all the great variety of works which God gives us to do.

At Banais, the source of the Jordan, I looked upon the outflowing of that river, directly out of the mountains. It comes out at one fountain, all complete. The Jordan seems as large at the fountain as when it reaches Merom, or even the Sea of Galilee. As I looked upon that great spring, flowing forth in all its refreshing power, with all its beauty and glory, I thought how like the spirit of Christ is that! It flows unceasingly,

and it has an unbounded quantity; it is inexhaustible; it reaches to every one. All persons, although they come by the thousands, may drink at that fountain; dip all their water-pots and fill them full, and it would in no sense reduce its waters. So the springs of salvation which are found in the Church of Christ unceasingly flow, free to all. No one drinking deprives any other one of a draught.

Brethren of the Church of Christ, the Church is stronger than it has ever been, the Bible as true as it ever was, Christ as powerful a Saviour as He ever has been; and God loves you as much as He ever loved any one, and the future is just as bright and hopeful as it ever was in the history of the Church or in the history of your life.

XIII

FRIENDSHIP FOR THE CHURCH

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (*1 Cor. xxx. 11.*)

IN the early church fathers we find many references to the Christian character Christ was supposed to create. They speak of the sevenfold strand which makes up the cord of Christian character, and mention that the strongest thread is that of loyalty to one's friends. The apostle in his letter to the Corinthians calls attention to the fact that they misunderstood the Lord's Supper; that the real intention of it was to bring to mind Jesus Christ's sacrifice, and that instead they had used it for an ordinary meal. They endeavoured to secure their board free by getting supplies from the Lord's table. They were so dissipated that many of them became intoxicated by the amount of wine which they drank at the Lord's table. This so disturbed the apostle that he told them that such an observance

was altogether unworthy of so sacred a subject, and he said: "If they eat and drink that bread and wine unworthily, they drink unto themselves condemnation." The clear meaning, which is often misunderstood, is that they did not understand its sacredness, nor did they wish to do so. They went to the Lord's Supper to get their dinner and the wine, and not to worship God, and that was doing it unworthily. If a person were to go to the Lord's Supper now with no desire to appreciate its holiness, or no purpose of worshipping God, but simply to secure his board, he would be eating and drinking unworthily under the form of expression we find in this letter.

The apostle also discovered that there were divisions among them, great divisions over the Lord's Supper, and he said to them: "Let every man examine himself. Don't let the church lay down a law for the control of every soul with reference to the Lord's Supper, but let every man examine himself." "And so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup, for he that drinketh unworthily, drinketh to himself condemnation." It does not condemn the whole church, and the whole church is not supposed to be cognizant of the spiritual condition of the human

soul, each person being responsible for himself when he goes to the Lord's Supper.

That the Lord's Supper was established for sinners and not for perfect saints is also made particularly clear. If a person is saintly to the extent of perfection and cannot sin any more, he has no need of the Lord's Supper. It can do him no good, for he is as good as he can be, anyhow. If a person who is perfect and without fault goes to the Lord's Supper and sits beside me, a poor, forlorn sinner, I would be discouraged by the presence of such a saintly character. I hope that we have a great many saintly characters. We believe that they are to be found in the earth, perhaps approaching perfection. But my experience in the church has been that all the members I have seen were sinners. I have not yet seen saints in the church who were so saintly that they did not need the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is for sinners to assist them to a more perfect appreciation of Christ and a higher living in His name. It is one of the agencies that the kind Father in heaven established for those of us who are weak and sinful, to assist us into a better life. That being the purpose of the Lord's Supper, they who are conscious of their sinfulness, they who feel themselves

unworthy of it, are the most worthy ones who come. They are the ones who should especially come when they feel unworthy, because it is to assist such into the right spirit that the Lord's Supper appears to have been established.

The strands of Christian character include Christ's noble characteristic of loyalty to one's friends. Christ has declared that: "Whosoever layeth down his life for his friend exhibits the noblest trait of character, for greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend."

There are two classes of people found in every church, and have been ever since the time of Christ, and it is into one of these divisions we all go. There are a great many people in every church who are weak and sickly, and who sleep. They are not unchristian, they are not unbelievers, they are not heretics, but they are acquiescent, they are latent, they are not active in the cause of the church. We should not seek to be in that class of latent believers, but to belong to the other class of watching believers. There are just as many martyr-like spirits to-day as ever in the world, perhaps a great many more. A great many men would go up to the stake, deliberately, to be tied there and

burned to death, if they had the same excitement, or the same cause, or the same purpose which characterized the martyrs of old. I think there are many people belonging to every church who show no disposition to take any part in its work, who, if there came an extreme call like that to the early martyrs, would immediately be found in the front rank. It is a surprising thing to find how many noble characters there are buried underneath the folds of society, how many grand martyrs who have never been called upon, seemingly, to make a sacrifice.

Cranmer, who was burned at the stake in England, and who was one of the chief advisers of Henry VIII, was a very vacillating man, a cowardly man, seemingly. He was full of all kinds of subtlety and assisted the king in a great many of his divorce cases, his quarrels with the Pope, with the people of England, and with the officials, in ways that are subject to severe criticism, and some even to utter condemnation. For my part I think Cranmer must have been a very faulty individual, a public official who did not understand his duty, or was untrue to the people. Yet that man, with all his faulty history, with all his vacillating character, when the time came for him to decide whether he would

retract what he believed and what he had said, or be burned at the stake, said: "I will go to the stake." The offer was made repeatedly, that if he would take back his declaration of what he believed concerning the Church of Christ, he could not only go free but hold official position under the queen; but he still resisted and went so far as to put out his hand into the blazing fire because it had once signed a document that he felt was untrue, and he burned to his death with all the stolid bravery of the noblest of the martyrs of the middle ages. There are in the church to-day men who seem to be vacillating, whose characters are full of inconsistencies, who, if the call was actually made as a question of life or death, would go to the stake as bravely as Cranmer did.

But the thought that I wish to urge upon you is that it is a mistake, if not a great sin, to belong to the uncertain class of people. The church is divided into an active membership and an inactive membership. All churches throughout the world have a list of both inactive and active members which they print for public observation. But I am speaking of a spiritual division of the church into active and inactive members, and not of matters recorded in the books of the church.

Loyalty to one's friends is an indication of true friendship, and that loyalty is displayed in its very best form with reference to the Church of Christ. We read in the writings of David: "How happy are they that are loyal to Jerusalem. If I forget thee, oh Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." To be loyal to one's friends is to be loyal to one's city, to one's nation, to one's God, and it is represented by the church fathers as the very best evidence of salvation and as the highest tribute to the spirit which Christ gives to man. Oftentimes we find this in very practical illustrations in life. It has occurred scores of times that men writing concerning some member of the church whom they desire to employ have said: "Is he loyal to his church?" They want to know if that is in his character, if that is part of his make-up, if when he promises to do a thing he does it. Industrial companies seek that information. It is in the printed blanks of three of the largest of the great commercial firms of Philadelphia: "Is he loyal to his church?" It is all because that character commands the respect of business men, and secures the confidence of those carrying on great enterprises.

Recently a young lady wrote to me concerning a member of the church, "Is he loyal to his church?" She said: "I want to know more about him than I know now. He is keeping company with me and I desire to be sure that his character is upright and trustworthy. Is he loyal to his church?"—one of the most proper and natural questions to ask if she wishes to ascertain the real character of the person with whom she is associating. Only a short time ago the War Department at Washington wrote to me concerning a member of this church. He was in Panama, and had applied for an official position of considerable prominence, and the Assistant Secretary of War wrote to me asking the same question: "Does he keep up his church duties?" In his application they had read that he was a member of this church. So among high and low everywhere, this loyalty of a person to his word, to his friends, to his church, or his city, or his nation, is considered to be one of the best traits of human living.

To be loyal to Jesus Christ we ought to be loyal to the church, and it requires more than a mere nominal connection with it. To be loyal, even though the principles to which

we are loyal are different from those in which others believe, is often evidence of a high character. There came into my house last week a lady from North Carolina, from the town where I was stationed in the great Civil War. In that town there lived an old man, a native of North Carolina, and his house was respected by officers who frequently visited there. I went in often to read in his library. The soldiers did not rob or destroy, and that man was known to be loyal to the state of North Carolina and disloyal, in that sense, to the Union of the States. But he was so upright about it, his character was so established, that he was respected by the enemies of his people, and we went back and forth with the fair understanding that we knew his position. Should I meet him, if he is living now, I would have a profound respect for the loyalty of the man to his state, to his people and to his city. It is a characteristic which in itself commands the admiration of mankind and the favour of God.

When Frederick IV died in 1861 and William I came in, the new emperor was told of Bismarck, who was then the national representative at the court of Russia, and the emperor said: "I dislike that man. He does not advocate the cause in which I believe.

He has nothing about him that seems congenial to me ; I want nothing to do with him." But one of his counsellors said to him : "You dislike him because he is so loyal to your predecessor. He is known everywhere as being in favour of the emperor who is dead. Would not it be of value for you to have a friend like that? Would not Bismarck be of great use to you if he were to be as loyal to you as he is to your predecessor?" "But," said William I, "he is too loyal to him to be loyal to me." "No," said the counsellor, "a man having that open disposition and that iron character can be loyal to more than one, and you can make him loyal to you." William I sent for Bismarck ; sat down and had a free talk with him ; told him he did not believe in many of the things he did, but said he : "I admire your loyalty to your friend." That won Bismarck over to William I. He became the great leader of Germany. He united Germany. He won in the great battles against France and William I became the emperor of all Germany, because he had been wise enough to take into his counsel a man who was loyal to some one else, and who, being loyal to some one else, would be loyal to him. When William II came in and refused to do the

same thing, he made the great mistake of his imperial life.

A man who owned a mine suddenly thought of the old folks at home, and his first thought was to send them a sum of money. Then he decided to go on to look over the ground himself and get for them the things they needed. He went with the money and expended it himself, raised the old homestead, covered it with new shingles, laid out the ground in front of the house, he supplied all that was needed and restored the old furniture they had used for fifty years. He put himself into that active list of loyal sons who give themselves with their money. There are so many people who give their money and don't give themselves—who do not give their prayers, or their time, or their personal attention to it. They belong to this class that are asleep, to those who are weak and sickly in the church. So it is important before we sit at the Lord's table that we all take into mind this very important exhortation of the apostle, that we get out of that class of the sickly, of the weak and those who are asleep, and that we put ourselves into the active class of loyal members of the church who find some work to do and enter upon it with all their heart. They are of more use to

the church than the mere added name upon the church list.

To find work to do is really a Christian trait—to find something to do for those in need—not waiting to be called upon, but seeking out places and opportunities. This is a characteristic of success in men and women in any line of life, but especially is it so in the church. In a great church with many members, it is very easy to be lost, very easy to be overlooked, to get into the background and sink from society, unless one have the determination to be loyal to the church in its activities, to be loyal to Christ and to keep all His commandments. Christ says unto all: "Watch." "Again I say unto you, watch." "Work for the night is coming." The church should be a help to those who desire to be of service to the Master, and so I say, Get out of the class of those who sleep. Leave the class of the sickly and the weak and find something to do for Christ in connection with the church. Only when you are in the active list can you derive the benefits which the church is intended to confer. A full, happy life as a Christian is a life of positive activity, where there is plenty to do. Oh, so much is left undone! No person need be without Christian work, and

if he will but set himself about it he will not only serve the Lord in accordance with God's commandments, but find in himself a well of joy springing up into the beauty of a fountain of everlasting life. Blessed it is to belong to the church if one is an active member, living a loyal life every day, seeking out something to do for the church. That means that humanity, through the opportunities which the church furnishes, will be blessed. No man can live as devoutly outside the church as he can on the inside. There are no opportunities to-day in the world such as there are in the church, and it is easier to love, easier to do and much more can be accomplished if one is a member of the church than if he is not. If he be a sinner, let him seek the church and its activities, for it is dangerous to come into the church and do nothing. It is dangerous to be merely a nominal member of the organization ; but to get into it and find something to do and set one's self at it and be found doing it, or to be ready when Christ comes and be found engaged in His work, to be on the watch when the Master appears, is the highest ambition of a poor and righteous Christian soul.

XIV

I SHALL BE SATISFIED

"Now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know when He doth appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and he that hath this hope in him maketh himself pure." (*1 John iii. 2, 3.*)

IN the beginning of their Christian life many are surprised that the Bible is so obscure in its references to heaven. Often great scholars who have not given the subject much careful thought have criticized the Scripture for having said something about heaven, and having left its description for the imagination of each individual.

You may well ask why this is so hidden, why the full revelation is not given; why we do not know just where heaven is, or just what it is, or just how we are to enter it, and just what is to occur in the ages to be. You may well wonder, and ask the question why. But it appears to be clearly shown in the teaching of the Bible that we are placed in this world of God for the purpose of discipline, training and teaching, so that we shall be fit for certain heavenly duties when our life on

this earth is finished. Now we are at school in this world, and Christ is the schoolmaster, and we are here more for the discipline of mind, and discipline of the soul, than for any information that we can obtain.

If heaven was so near as to blind our eyesight with its brilliancy it would injure us greatly. Or if hell were so near that the fumes of its fires could be smelled; if we could realize what an awful thing hell is; if we were told that it were a literal fire, as it is not; if we were told it is such a place of suffering as many have described it to be in their imagination, it would frighten us all out of any happiness in this life.

We know by what we understand, by our own constitution, that we cannot be driven into goodness, neither can we be bribed into it. The father who bribes his son continually to get him to do right soon finds that he has educated that son into hypocrisy, into concealment, and damaged his character beyond measure. The father cannot win the love of his son by buying it. Neither can he win the love of his son by force of cruel chastisement. It is opposite to our nature thus to be influenced, and if God is giving us the opportunity here to be trained into the likeness of His Son, Jesus Christ, He will neither bribe

us nor frighten us, and hence both heaven and hell are obscured. For that reason He only mentions them as great facts, but facts about which He gives us no very near view. How foolish people have been who have described hell as a literal fire. How foolish those enthusiasts have been who have described the details of what they think they have seen of heaven, when God would not have been so unkind as to give them either a near view of heaven, or a near view of hell.

We are here to be trained to love God. We are here to be left to our own accord within certain great providential limitations, in order that we may be tempted to do wrong, or drawn to do right, and have free choice between those extremes. For in choosing we make our characters, and fit ourselves for heavenly places.

It is not stretching the imagination to suppose that God is training up here on earth angels to fill the seats and missions of the angels that fell in that far-back day, nearer the creation than we are. If we are being fitted for His service we must love Him for love's sake. We must love Him for His sake. We must love Him for truth's sake. We must have character and independence, and we must go through the discipline of

this world for the sake of producing that character.

But of the character of the life beyond this we do get certain broad statements, about which there need be no controversy. Let me bring you, if I can, to a realizing sense of how much the Bible does say concerning the things that are in the spirit land, and in the spirit world.

I stood for the first time upon the Rigi, in the Alps, and looked down upon the lakes, and away upon the distant peaks of the white Alps, and then turned in the early morning light, and looked down upon the course of the Rhine, as it went winding its way down to the sea and far out, for fifty miles, over the great and beautiful plain. There were cities here and there, villages in one place and little hamlets in another, palaces to be seen on the hillsides, and fountains flashing in the coming of the sun, and there the winding stream, going on its everlasting pace as Tennyson so wonderfully describes it. As I stood in that morning light and looked out upon that land, I said to myself, "I will buy a ticket that will cover all this territory. I will visit all this. I will go down first to the Falls of Schaffhausen then go down to Strasburg, and down to the sea, and come up

around Germany, and from there into Austria, and all the boundaries within my vision I am going to visit. I will make my home with the poor, and know just how the peasantry of the German land live, and try to get introductions into palaces of the princes that I can describe them in a newspaper or magazine." All the ambitions to visit all that view were before me on that morning at Rigi.

So a young man or woman stands upon the mountains of youth and looks forward into life, and the vision covers all these many things. Oh, the beautiful visions of youth, gazing out upon the possibilities of life! There are rivers and fountains, there is magnificent scenery. There is hope; there is wealth; there is life; there is fame; there is success. The youth pictures the time when he shall have millions of money to travel around the wide world, and see all the glories of which he has heard only in hints. He looks forward to the time when he shall have his own sweet home, when he shall sit by his own fireside, when his wife shall be there and children will be prattling about the floor. He pictures the time when through many years of health and strength he shall walk the earth an independent being, and

he looks forward to the beauty of it, looks forward to fame and glory. He is on Rigi's heights, looking out on the dazzling beauty of what it is possible yet to be.

But the years have gone. Some of the places in that wonderful scene I visited, but the number could be counted on my fingers. Still the vision is there.

There stood beside me once on the magnificent Mount Viso, the highest mountain of the Western Alps, a man eighty years of age, and when he looked around on it, he said, "It is the most wonderful thing I have ever seen. I am glad I saw it before I died." He saw it going down the mountain, and when we helped him over the cold snow and ice, and over the glaciers, until his feet were on the solid ground of the valley that leads into Italy ; and when we parted from him, he said, "I shall never, never see it again."

No visions of life seem to be complete. The youth goes through his history and may have found no millions of money, and may not have travelled beyond his own native village ; may have had no home ; may have had but little education ; may have been an invalid all his life ; may have had no baby upon his knee ; may have had no wife to sit by his fireside.

My attention was called the other day to the fact that one of our soldiers from my native town was buried near Norfolk during that great Civil War, and that the grave was unmarked even by a gravestone, though it was known by the register of the cemetery; and it called to my mind the fact that I saw him, when we marched away from Massachusetts, bid a tender and heart-breaking farewell to her who was to be his wife when he returned from the war. She is living still, alone. They were engaged to be married; they had corresponded for nearly two years. Then came the battle, and then the death, and all that she heard was that he was killed in battle; but who cared for him in his last hours she never knew. Who heard his last words she could not tell; the last letter she received from him, he was in health and ambitious for the closing of the war. I see her sometimes. She does not know what a reverence is in my heart for her. She desired to have a home, husband, children. Her heart is sweet and Christian. She is resigned to the way of God with her, but if you were to ask her what life has been to her, she would say, "A perpetual disappointment."

I look back upon life as you do, if you are

seventy years of age, with the thought of how little you have seen compared with what you expected to see.

I remember when in college, we studied very closely the scientific view then coming into vogue, Darwin's theory of the creation, the evolution of all things from unknown protoplasm, from a potency hidden far back in creation. When we grew excited in the debates over it we thought that we should live to see the time when it would all be explained by science, and that we should know then how the world began. We should be acquainted with all the details of its development. We would be certain of finding the missing link, and all things would be as plain as the primer to the man who looked upon the sciences. I have lived many years since those college days, and I am no nearer understanding what I remember of it, indeed I am more in the mystery than then.

I remember looking through a great telescope upon Mars, and it brought it so near. There seemed to be the mountains, and valleys, and even the sparkling of water, and while we could not see men on it, we felt men must be living there, having the same atmosphere as we have here, and the same sort of protection in every way. And I thought as

I looked through the telescope—"I shall probably live to see a telescope so large and powerful that we will actually see the people in their labour in the fields, and the villages and cities, upon Mars." I have so longed to see it. It has been a dream of my life to look through to the distant worlds on worlds and see what God had made there, and what men and women were doing there. But I have not seen it.

I remember going as a newspaper man to meetings of the Spiritualists, and to the Ethical Culturists, and to all the great variety of fads then in Boston, so numberless it is useless to recite them. To one after the other I went to write of them for the newspapers, and I became very much interested in the mysterious things which they did, in the ability of the clairvoyant to read my mind, and though an entire stranger, to tell what I was thinking about. They told me about my own history until I wished they had not told so much in the presence of my friends. I became astonished that a man could read thus the heart and mind of another person. I longed to know more about what the soul is and what its relation is to the body, and what our soul relation is to each other.

I remember visiting a most wonderful ex-

hibition of telepathy, by which a man in another room wrote down there without any possible chance of collusion, and with the variation of only a few words, my own writing at the same time.

I have waited for the development of the years, in order to get nearer, nearer to the spirit world ; to know what is this mysterious influence that comes over from the other side to this, and which I know goes from this to the other. Loved ones one after another have dropped aside, and their bodies have been laid away, and the longing has increased and increased. Oh, to communicate with them, to get some message from them, to know that they love me still, and to let them know I love them still, deeper and more faithfully than when they were on the earth ! Oh, the yearning to communicate, to know what is the connection between this world and the spirit world !

But the years have unrolled their history, and it is just as mysterious now as it was then. No one seems better able to explain than then.

When I was converted to Christ, the Bible assumed an entirely new phase to me. It was a spiritual Book, it was transfigured and illuminated. There were many things in it

that before had seemed contradictory. I could not help finding a longing in my heart to know what they were put there for. But while year after year has developed my interpretations, while nearly all the contradictions have disappeared to my satisfaction, yet the book itself remains a greater, greater mystery.

What is it that influences a man from this book as from no other? What is it that influenced men to write the life of Christ in the way they did? How could they have done it at that time? The most miraculous thing save Christ Himself is the record the apostles have written of His life and His teaching. So simple; so truthful; so natural; so adjusted to circumstances; so true to history; and yet the mystery of how it was done remains, deepening with every year. I do not understand.

I thought some day I should answer the question how sin came into the world—why it came. But while we do catch a glimpse, as stated in the beginning, of the fact that sin is left in the world, and temptation is here for the purpose of disciplining us, yet it is only a glimpse. I had that vision years ago. I have no deeper or wider one now. It is a mystery still. Why for the good of

mankind should sin, evil, Satan and the angels of Satan be around us?

Oh, the books I have thought I should read! The inability to use my eyes as I wish has made me pass the shelves of my library with an indescribable longing and sense of disappointment. There are shelves and shelves of books, bought at various times. When I saw a title that was to my taste, I said, "I will buy that book. It will do me good. It will help my people, if I can read it." So I took that book home, put it on the shelf among the new books, and the shelf kept filling up with unread books. Then another shelf, and then another. I now go through that library and glance at those titles and wish I had time to read them and digest them; and the awful thought is ever present, "I shall never read them." Thousands of books that would be so instructive and inspiring, I shall never, never read.

I thought once that I would delight to sing as the angels sing, that I would like to have the power that Jenny Lind had. Oh, how exquisitely simple was that nightingale of song! What entire absence there was of display, of the unnatural, how plain was all her expression, and how clear her voice, and how delightfully lovely were her feminine

ways! When I heard her sing in Music Hall in Boston, I said, "I will devote myself to music. I will learn to sing and learn to play," and yet now I know I shall never sing like that. I am sure now that it is too late.

I thought once that I would like to lecture over the known earth, to visit every land and speak in every tongue, and that I would devote myself for years to the study of languages in order that I might lecture or give addresses in French, Italian, Spanish and German. But save in England and China it never came. The opportunities never came, and never will.

I have thought as I heard discussions between talented men of great leadership in the sciences to which they are attached, "How much they know that I do not know. How much they have had an opportunity to learn which I shall never learn," and I sat in humility in the presence of the great geniuses of science, and thought what wonders of joy they must possess to know so much that I shall never know!

I have longed and longed to see Christ on the earth fulfilling every mission, and to see all people truly Christian. I have desired that each should be better than I have ever been. I have desired to see an ideal church,

in which every person would be an ideal follower of Jesus Christ. I do not expect to see it. Perfection is not coming, evidently, in my day, or my time. Many are weak in the faith, it may be, and some, perhaps, hypocritical. All have a measure of it, in some degree, and there is no perfect church, and there are not perfect people in it. I have often thought if there were they would destroy the church, through the discouraging influence they would have on the rest of us. I do not expect any more that mankind will be perfect. I am training myself, as you are, to look on the good in men and to overlook and forget their faults.

But what says this Book? "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him." Is that a message from God? And does He not say, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake in His likeness"? What a message to a disappointed world! Does He not say in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus that Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom and that he had all the good things made up for him which he lost when he was on the earth? And does He not in the text I have quoted say we shall be

like Him with all His divine wisdom; with all His knowledge of the past and all His knowledge of the future; with all His divine power to take in every thought and every scene and every detail?

If we shall be like Him we shall see Him, and we shall see all things as they are. We shall be like Him. Ah, then, let the imagination expand; picture heaven to be what you will. No matter what you have missed in this life, you will have it in the other life. People say to me, "Would you expect to have a piano in heaven?" "Would you wish to have a church in heaven?" "Would you wish to do this, that, or the other?" It does not make any difference what you want in heaven; you will have it. The statement is broad and clear, and it is unmistakable, "You shall be satisfied, when you awake in His likeness." To be satisfied is to have all we want, and consequently if you do not get a literal piano, if you do not have the kind of association exactly, literally, you will have that which takes its place in a more satisfactory form. But what difference does it make how we let the imagination go? Since I read this a day or two ago, I have let my imagination loose, and I have said, "I will see my child and see my loved ones of the

days gone by; what they loved to do on earth, they are doing now, and what I love to do on earth I shall be doing then, and together we shall walk the fields of God through the eternal ages! I can see them gathering flowers, I can hear them singing, and I can see them in the joy of eternal youth, in the presence of the King, in the beauty of His holiness." I see them all, and yet some persons say that is a wild vision. It is not wild, it cannot be wild, because the biggest things ever attained, the greatest things ever longed for, and the highest hopes that ever came to the human heart, will be filled in that land.

But read what the Book says, that the groans of David in this life shall be turned into shouts of victory in the other life; the Dead March in "Saul" on earth, will be the Hallelujah Chorus in heaven. Oh, it is all coming.

Once in a wreck on the Atlantic, for twenty-two days we drifted about. For twenty of these days we were in suffering for fear of immediate death. Storm, darkness, no view of the sun, drifting over the wild, wild ocean. No sight of a ship, and the food being destroyed in the hold, no fire, and lashed to the mast. I roped myself day after day, and slept standing against the mast, as

the water curled and roared and hissed around my feet, and we gave up all hope. No more, I thought, shall I see the land of America ; no more the Stars and Stripes ; no more the little home ; no more the wife and the children. But when on a morning off the coast of Newfoundland (we knew not then what land it was), the sun burst through the clouds and sent heavenly halos down upon the agitated sea, hope began to rise that we might yet be saved. When the dark clouds of smoke from an approaching steamer were seen distinctly on the horizon, we all wept. We could not talk. If we endeavoured to speak a word we burst out crying. All cried, sailors, captain and passengers. And when that steamer came in sight, and with tears streaming down our faces, we watched its course, some one proposed that we sing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." No one could start it. Every attempt to utter a syllable was to burst into sobs and cries. The steamer came and took us in tow and took us into St. John's, and we stepped out upon the shore. All was back again, land and houses. We were coming home, and home was still here ; wife was still here ; children were still here ; friends still here ; all was ours again.

Just so it is with the disappointed life. No matter who it is; no matter how great the loss, just so sure it is that when, out of the storm and out of the disappointment and despair of this life, we come in sight of the heavenly land, then will all be brought back again that was worth having in this world. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him." If you love Him, heaven cannot be pictured too bright.

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